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METAL SCORN

ISSUE 3
AUTUMN 1999

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ANCIENT RITES
ROTTING CHRIST
CRIMINAL
MARDUK
IMMOLATION
MESMERIZE
WARDOG

SADISTIC NOISE
TIME MACHINE
STIGMATA IV
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EDITORIAL

Writing these last words, only happiness is the emotion that conquers me. Happiness because after months of hard work, finally the third strike of Metal Storm becomes reality. After the experience that we earned from the last two issues, we are coming back stronger than ever with only one goal. The best information for you, about our favourite music. Also this issue is our first attack to countries out of Hellas and that's the reason that the third issue of Metal Storm is written in English. We hope that we'll continue the tradition that other Hellenic fanzines left behind and help the Hellenic metal scene to get well known all over the world. Finally, I have to thank everyone that helped us for this issue and especially: Sound and Vision, Black Lotus and In Vision Musik! I'm waiting your letters for comments and new ideas about Metal Storm. Our message is: metalheads, live together in unity. Heavy metal is one music, one idea. Don't let them (you know who they are) to destroy our music. I hope you'll enjoy our issue. Keep on headbanging!

Nikos Tzouannis

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MESMERIZE

The last few years Italian scene made fantastic progress. With bands like Labyrinth, Rhapsody or Skylark Italy proved that heavy metal is still alive there. Now it's time for another band from this country, Mesmerize to continue the tradition that all these bands created, and guide Italy to the next metal century. Their Bass player Andrea has more to say about the band.

METAL STORM:: ***Hi, Andrea! Because people don't know a lot about Mesmerize, can you tell us few words?***

Mesmerize: Sure I can! In 1988, Folco, Andrea, Paolo and Piero formed the band (whose name was then The Mesmerizers). In the beginning it was just a high school band, and it was intended just to have fun playing together with friends; during the years it has become more professional, and the band released two demotapes, in 1991 and 1993, which collected good reviews on Italian magazines, and meanwhile playing live gigs a lot. On the way, there have been a couple of changes of bass players, until myself, Tito, joined Mesmerize in 1994; then we started things in a real semi-professional way, looking for a label to produce our CD.On our quest for a contract, in 1996 we got in touch with Lucretia Records, but some months later, due to musical divergence, we resigned the label. After that, we finally signed a two-album contract with Underground Symphony, who was more interested in our music. So we've recorded our long-waited-for debut CD between November and December 1997 at Zenith Studios in Lucca; we had the master ready by January, but, due to some other delays, the CD "Tales Of Wonder" was just released in July 1998. The feedback from the metal kids, the press and everyone has been really great, so we've been definetely satisfied about the way things started going... During this last months we've played a considerable amount of live concerts, while in the meantime we've been writing the songs for our second CD.

METAL STORM: ***Are you satisfied with the sales of "Tales of Wonder"? Which are your future plans?***

Mesmerize: Well, honestly when we talk about sales, we're still on a very lovewr level, compared to other great italian bands of these days such as Rhapsody or Labyrinth ... This doesn't mean anyway that we're not satisfied: we're very happy, because the sales we got for Tales Of Wonder (which, let's nto forget it , was our debut Cd) went over our best expectations! Of course we're looking at the future with confidence, and we're quite sure that our next album, with a better distribution, will go even better than this one!
About our future plans, we're currently composing lots of new stuff, since we'd like to get in the Recording Studio by the end of the year, to release our 2nd CD for the beginning of year 2000: about twenty songs have been composed, then the band will choose the best ones to be recorded. The CD has no title yet, but some song titles I can tell you are "Doom Of The Darksword", "Vultures Paradise", "Argos Died Twice" and "Pit Of The Charming Snakes". That's for our medium-time intentions ...
About the near future, first of all we're gonna keep on with the adequate promotion of the CD "Tales Of Wonder", in the most traditional way: playing gigs, which by the way is the thing we love the most! Then in these days we should be out again for our fans on a CD: precisely, with a partecipation on a double Tribute CD to Iron Maiden, which will be released in June 1999 by the italian label Adrenaline, and distributed worldwide. This double CD, sold at the price of a normal CD, will feature 12 bands from all over the world (mainly from U.S.A. and Germany - we will be the only italian one) performing Iron Maiden tunes on Disc 1 and their own songs on Disc 2. We recorded our own version of the classic "The Prisoner", and remastered a version of "The Werewolf" from "Tales Of Wonder" for Disc 2.

METAL STORM: ***Why did you chose "Mesmerize" as a name of your band? Are you planning to "Mesmerize" metal fans with your music?***

Mesmerize: When the band was born, the chosen name was actually "The Mesmerizers": you know, the term "Mesmerize" is inspired by Mesmerism, which is an hypnotic science tied to animal magnetism, founded by the austrian Doctor Franz Anton Mesmer in the XVIII Century. At those times, the guys of the band were very interested in such matters (well, even nowadays, actually!) and it looked like a real good and very intriguing name for a Metal Band.
In 1996, then, we decided to change our first monicker "The Mesmerizers"into the actual one "Mesmerize" : we realized that we needed an easier name, more pronounceable, but without changing it too much. We were still very tied to that Mesmerism matter, so we really wouldn't change our name, in our hearts: so we came to a compromise, just modifying it a little, at the moment we signed our contract with Underground Symphony. You know, one of the most annoying things in our first years has been the fact that people, promoters and jounalists mispelled our name, mutilating it in every possible way!!! Figure, we also keep a booklet where we've written all the various interpretations of our name....sometimes it can be funny, if you wanna have a laugh!! Well, changing our name made possible that the mispelling has decreased of the 80%!! Quite a result, huh? eheheheh

Mesmerize - *"Tales of Wonder"*

Everybody knows that at the last two years, Italy has presented great progress concerning it's metal scene, by releasing very good bands. This nice feeling is being refreshed by the power-metallers Mesmerize with their debut "Tales of Wonder", building foundations for a future career in the heavy metal scene. Their singer Folco Orlandini - known by his appearance with Time Machine and Eddy Antonin - is the strongest weapon of the band. With his very nice voice giving a lot of credits to the band. With songs like "The werewolf", "Sea of lies" and "Hell on wheels", the mesmerizers of Italy succeed to be differentiated from the many power metal albums that have been released this year, I hope that they will reach success with their next album, something that they deserve.
17/20
Nikos Tzouannis

METAL STORM: ***From what are you getting influence to compose music? Which are your favorite musicians?***

Mesmerize: I think that just after one listen to our CD "Tales Of Wonder", our influences are very clear: We play True Heavy Metal, so we can be connected to the great metal bands of the 80's such as IRON MAIDEN, MANOWAR, BLACK SABBATH and HELLOWEEN. Of course we're trying to mix up all our various influences together, to create our own personal sound: it would be very limitative just to copy the great music of famous Metal bands, don't you think? So, when we compose our stuff, we just keep following our hearts and our tastes, without any compromise to please the "market". To make you an example, actually we're not that much into this new "power metal" wave, with lots of keyboards and symphonic influences: I think that most of these new bands coming out from almost everywhere are just jumping on the new trend bandwagon; they play this kind of music just because it's selling nowadays, but that's just False Metal. As for ourselves, we've been playing our Heavy Metal from the start, because this is the music we love, and it comes straight from our hearts: razor riffs, loud guitars and powerful harmonies... that's the way we want to be! Apart from this matter, my personal favourite musicians are really too much to be mentioned, but I'll give you some names anyway; a very important thing to me is not just the tecnique of this musician, but most of all his attitude: to be True Metal Believers in all their lives! That's why I recall Steve Harris, Joey DeMaio, Bruce Dickinson, Ronnie James Dio, Scott Ian, Markus Grosskopft, Rock'n'Rolf, ..pheewww! They're definetely too much! Eheheheh!

METAL STORM: ***Are you satisfied with the reactions of the press concerning your band?***

Mesmerize: Yes, the press has been very kind and supportive towards us, expecially in foreign countries just like Germany and Greece: we're still receiving comments and doing interviews for magaziones and fanzines from these places, and this really fills us with joy! In Italy the situation is quite different: ok, we got very good reviews and interviews even here, but you have to understand that almost every single italian magazine has tight commercial deals with various labels, so it's very rare to get honesty in their pages!

METAL STORM: ***Mesmerize were formed in 1988. Why did it take so long to release your first album?***

Mesmerize: Well, let me add that we started playing in a semi-professional way just in 1994, so we're not that old (ehehehe): before, it was just a kind of highschool band, to play together with mates and have fun-fun-fun! Ok, even right now FUN is our first aim anyway, but the band just got serious in the last 4-5 years...
Anyway, right at those times, it was kinda hard for us to get a discographic contract: you know, those days the leading genres of heavy music was prog-metal or grunge, so you can understand why our eighties-metal-oriented music was seen as something obsolete and coarse. Luckily, the last two years have seen the rebirth of classic heavy metal and we signed a contract with Underground Symphony, so taking the chance to spread our music to a wider audience.

METAL STORM: ***Your singer Falco Orlandini is famous in the underground scene, as he is singing in a lot of bands. Does it create you any problems?***

Mesmerize: Well, it has to be pointed out that the only work Folco did before getting the deal with Underground Symphony was just the Time Machine stuff... the other ones just came after the recording of our CD "Tales Of Wonder"... I really don't know, but I think that his collaborations neither helped us nor obstacolated us, because what we've

achieved up till now is just because of the strenght of the whole band. It is undoubtly true, anyway, that having such a talentous singer in your band can shed some good light over you... We actually never got that much benefits for the "Act II: Galileo" thing, at those times: to make you an example, there always has been some confusion in the press about it, and even Time Machine themselves never made it clear to magazine and people; I guess that was easier for them, even if unfair to us, of course. Folco was just a session-player for their CD "Galileo", and he made it just to get some light and attention on him and MESMERIZE: unfortunately our band's name was seldom mentioned, so this collaboration didn't turn out that useful for us. I can tell you that for some times (and occasionally even nowadays) Folco was pointed out as Time Machine's singer, which he wasn't, of course: sometimes this was quite annoying, I can assure you. So, the bottom line is that we like collaborations, anyway.... But they should be well pointed out, so there could be no confusion among fans.

METAL STORM: ***You belong to Underground Symphony. Are you planning to follow the steps of Rhapsody and Labyrinth? Are you satisfied with your label?***

Mesmerize: Following the steps of such two talented and successful bands would be definetely fantastic: you know, we're not actually planning anything; if success will come to us, we'll be very happy to get it... if not, we'll keep on playing our music having fun as always! About Underground Symphony, we signed with them a 2 album contract. It may look an easy answer, but we're in good terms with our label; we really appreciate the confidence Maurizio Chiarello (Underground Symphony's boss) had and still have about us, and in particular during those years when classical Heavy Metal such as ours wasn't seen that well. There are actually quite a few things that could be emproved in our label (...don't forget it's a small indipendent one after all, with very small budget and distribution!) but right now we're satisfied with the way things are going; we still hope the future to be even brightier, of course. If things are not changing in the short future, for example with a new offer for a deal with a bigger label, we're gonna release for Underground Symphony our 2nd CD too.

METAL STORM: ***If you had the opportunity to communicate with persons you admire, who would you choose and why?***

Mesmerize: Uhhh, very tough answer! Talking about musical matters, my first answer would be Steve Harris & Bruce Dickinson, but since I've already had the chance to meet and talk to both of them, I think I'll have to choose someone else! Eheheheh! Let's see... I think I'd love to get to know the football players of my favourite team, which is JUVENTUS F.C. !!! You know, I'm a crazy fan of Juve, and of Alessandro Del Piero in particular: funny thing, considered that he's also younger than me! :)

METAL STORM: ***What are you listening to lately? Name us your best 5 LP's ever.***

Mesmerize: Well, lately I've listened to the usual kind of music I'm in love with: HEAVY METAL! So, the Cd's I put on my player recently are DRAKKAR "Quest For Glory", GAMMA RAY "PowerPlant", IRON SAVIOR "Unification", BRUCE DICKINSON "The Chemical Wedding", plus of course the IRON MAIDEN TRIBUTE I talked about before: this CD definetely rocks! It's been very cured under every aspect, the recordings, the graphics... and the bands are quite very good too! (not talking about Mesmerize, of course!! Eheheheh!) Talking about my all-time-favourites, well, the choice is really easy: IRON MAIDEN "Powerslave", HELLOWEEN "Keeper Of the Seventh Keys 1 & 2", GAMMA RAY "Land Of The Free", BRUCE DICKINSON "Accident Of Birth".

METAL STORM: ***Can you tell us some Italian bands for which you think, that the future belongs to them?***

Mesmerize: I won't tell you names such as Rhapsody or Labyrinth, since the present already belongs to them! Anyway, these days around there are really a lot of good bands here in Italy: the ones I love most are without any doubt WHITE SKULL and DRAKKAR. White Skull has recently got a big deal with nuclear Blast, so I'm pretty sure they'll be the next "big thing"! As for Drakkar, we're close friends, and I have already listened to some of their new stuff: man, these guys kick ass! Power metal at its best! I hope that a little slice of future could belong to Mesmerize too, of course..ehehe...but, who knows???

METAL STORM: ***What would you like to do and never did?***

Mesmerize: Take my University Degree in Economics!!! Seriously talking, I'm just missing to write my final thesis to get it, since during all these years I've already passed all the 32 required exams! So I'm almost at the end, and I'm really looking forward to finish my studies!

METAL STORM: ***A lot of people say that heavy metal should not be popular, it must stay underground. Do you agree or not, why?***

Mesmerize: That's a quite controversial question: it's undoubt that if a certain kind of Music, born in the Underground scene, gets some popularity, the tentacles of business grab some of his honesty away. I think that the right stays in the middle: Heavy Metal will never be a worldwide sell-out just like the Spice Crap, so there's no fear to see it becoming very popular and lose all the soul and passion; on the other hand, staying underground won't let the scene reach a bigger number of kids, and that wouldn't be good at all!

METAL STORM: ***Which album would you like to create?***

Mesmerize: To tell you the truth, "Tales Of Wonder", at the time of his release, was very near to my ideal of the album I've always loved to create: having fun in writing it, having fun in recording it, having fun in listening to it and reading the lyrics, and watching the cover painting and stuff like that!
As you can see, I'm quite a simple man, and I have no such huge ambitions or massive expectations: I just like things that please me in doing them! The fact that these things can bring joy and pleasure even to other people just add flavour in that! So, as long as we'll have fun, always expect new albums from me and Mesmerize!

METAL STORM: ***Which was the gloriest moment of heavy metal according to your opinion?***

Mesmerize: No question about it: the Eighties was the golden era of our favourite genre... Just remember when Iron Maiden played 4 night in a row at the Long Beach Arena, it was 1985, I guess! Those days Metal was conquering the world, full of strenght and very innovative; not that I'm complaining about today, but I think that period was unique regarding the interest of the kids towards Metal!

METAL STORM: ***What do you think about the war?***

Mesmerize: It's terrible. So much hate, so many killings. And all this right at just some Kms from us. That's scary, to tell you the truth: I have no possible ideas or solutions for the near future of this conflict; even remedies in my opinion sometimes are worse than the poison itself, so the NATO attack in Serbia won't solve anything, and won't get people of Kosovo back to their homes... it will just bring some more hate, and it's definetely not needed.

METAL STORM: ***Do you know anything about Hellas? Hellenic bands?***

Mesmerize: Uhhhh... I'm aware of the terrible figure I'm doing, but at the moment I don't recall any! Probably I've already listened to some of them, but without knowing thay were from Greece! Please forgive me!! Eheheheh!

METAL STORM: ***How would you describe your music to someone who didn't know anything about Mesmerize?***

Mesmerize: The music we play is classic Heavy Metal, made of fast, melodic and solid features... I can tell you that it's not hyper-technical and the songs are not particulary complex or twisted; in other words we're not competing to show who's the best and we're not even trying to demonstrate that we're better than others, both because we aren't and we don't care about it; doing this could damage the beauty and the listenability of the songs themselves, in my opinion. Well, as I told you, we've tried to make a powerful, fast and fresh album, but most of all enjoyable and with good melodies... I already know that some jerk will say that it's not so technical....so what? We don't care, cos we've not forgotten the typical sound of the Eighties, and so the kids of our generation; we're inspired by that kind of music, which is not the symphonic-power-prog-fuck, but it's pure and simple HEAVY METAL, and nowadays it's not so easy to find it around. I don't think that nostalgic fans have found a satisfactory band in this field yet (as a fan of the Eighties myself, I haven't yet) and we hope to succeed in incarnating that spirit, obviously filtered through the years that have past.

METAL STORM: ***Thanks Andrea and finish the interview as you like.***

Mesmerize: Well, first of all, to get some more info about us, let me suggest you our own internet site, the PAGE OF WONDER, that can be reached at the address http://welcome.to/mesmerize ; the site keeps getting new contacts, and it's constanlty updated by the band itself. In it you can find news, photos, tour dates and most of all audio samples of the songs of the CD "Tales Of Wonder", with also some rarities taken from the first Demo-Tapes. Internet is such an amazing resource, interesting and amusing, and in this case even useful to get to know everything about us MESMERIZE!
Said this, I'd love to thank you all for your time and interest toward us! You've been very kind to us, and I hope to meet you all at one of our gigs in the future! Bye!!!!

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NIKOS TZOUANNIS

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AIRGED LAMH

Lately the Hellenic metal scene seems that is getting stronger more than ever before. One of the bands having quality as much as power in their music is Airged Lamh. As a heavy metal band with many Celtic influences, Airged Lamh created one of the best demos ever inside the Hellenic borders, "A Vertigo Edda arised". Let's see what the singer of the band Giannis Georgopoulos is having to say.

METAL STORM: ***I'd like you to tell us a few things about Airged Lamh from their beginning till now.***

Airged Lamh: The band was founded in 1987 under the name Ragnarok, from Giannis Georgopoulos (me) and Alexandros Vasilopoulos, the guitarist of the band, who composes the music with Michalis Peradinos, who came later in 1991. I'm writing the lyrics. Around 1996 we found out that there were two other bands with the name Ragnarok in the metal scene. So we were too many, something that forced us to change our name, and because we don't like triteness names, we searched and finally found Airged Lamh.

METAL STORM: ***And the idea about the demo?***

Airged Lamh: The idea about the demo didn't come just like that. It was our target from the first time we were together as a band, because I believe every band has as a target the creation of a demo. We wanted a very good demo, our compositions to be very good, the best we could achieve. So we oriented to compose always in metal, but also to express our ideas and some values taken from the heroism, from another world, because these values have declined. So when we had the opportunity, I mean the money, we finally managed to release this demo.

METAL STORM: ***Are you satisfied by the sales of the demo until now?***

Airged Lamh: Yes, we are satisfied! We sold over 500 copies.

METAL STORM: ***And are you satisfied with the reviews and the reactions of the metal press?***

Airged Lamh: The reviews from the press were better than what I expected and this is something that gave us courage to continue. So we swore to ourselves that the next step would be better or at least in the same level with our demo.

METAL STORM: ***Which are your expectations/ambitions after the release of the demo?***

Airged Lamh: Our next target is no more a demo. One is enough, as we believe. From the moment we are satisfied with the demo, we'd like to release a very good CD. We're working in new material of ours, influenced from the two books of Jim Fizz Patrick: "Leo Labaam Gem" and "Airged Lamh" and we'll try to create a concept.

METAL STORM: ***Should we expect something soon?***

Airged Lamh: Yes, but I don't if it will be soon or not. It will be soon if a label signs us. But if we won't sign with a company, someone can understand that things are very tough.

METAL STORM: ***Which are the problems you are facing as a band?***

Airged Lamh: Bad sound in our lives! (just kidding...). Our main problem is that we don't have free time. You know, we're not 18 years old going at school, so having a lot of hours playing our music. We don't have the time we need for our band and that's the bigger problem. I mean when the four members of Airged Lamh finish working in our jobs late, we don't have the disposition to play music. Also a problem that belongs to the past now, is that we couldn't find persons to cooperate with.

METAL STORM: ***According to my personal opinion your influences are similar to bands like Manowar and Blind Guardian. Which, do you believe, are your influences?***

Airged Lamh: As you've said before, definitely Manowar. Also everybody in the band listens to Helloween in the period of "Walls of Jericho" and "Keeper of the seven keys", Blind Guardian, Morgana Lefay, Dio, a lot of European folk, e.t.c.

METAL STORM: ***Does the name of your demo, "A vertigo Edda arised", mean something special for you?***

Airged Lamh: First of all, Edda is a "circle" of poems. So the title means "A fast circle of poems is rising". So the title of the demo introduces us to the fan and gives him an idea of what he is going to listen.

METAL STORM: ***You are active in the Hellenic scene for eleven years, what's your opinion about it?***

Airged Lamh: In these eleven years, but also before them, as a fan, I've seen a large number of bands. I've seen great bands disappearing, without deserving this. I and Alexandros (Alexander) faced a lot of problems, and we believe that the biggest problem of the Hellenic scene is the army. You are losing a period from your life, but if you believe in your dream, nothing is lost. The Hellenic scene has the potential to do a lot. There are old bands that continue to play and new bands that give new blood in the Hellenic scene.

METAL STORM: ***Which are the most popular Hellenic bands, according to you?***

Airged Lamh: Let's start from the older: Spitfire, Rust, Power Crue, Marauder, Sarissa, Blood Covered, Ice Divine, Crush, Wisdom, Horizon's End, Fortress under Siege, Breaking Silence, Nemesis, Hatred, Guardian Angel, Mystery.

METAL STORM: ***If you had the opportunity to alter something to the Hellenic scene, what would you do?***

Airged Lamh: First of all, I'd establish a record company with someone who has a relationship with metal music, experience, knowledge of how to manage the bands. Also I wish to stop the dispute among bands, and instead to help each other. I'd improve the quality of the bands, in oder to respect the metal fan. These are my wishes, mainly.

METAL STORM: ***Which are your arguments to convince the metal fan to listen to your demo?***

Airged Lamh: Airged Lamh are planning to do something bigger now: To cross the borders of Hellas musically. Our stories are from European history with lots of folk influences. We are talking about ideas and values that, we believe, have lost their meaning with time and declined. We try to convince the metal fan through our music, through our lives and of course through our songs?

METAL STORM: ***How would you like to finish this interview?***

Airged Lamh: First of all thanks to Metalstorm for the interview, and I wish to all their fans to support the local scene of their country. Thanx...

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Dream Devoid

Dream Devoid are a power metal group from Athens, which is trying constantly to improve and add new elements to their music, achieving to have their own style and personality. Their guitar player-composer Lyberis is speaking to us about the band, working now on their second demo.

METAL STORM: ***By the time speaking, you exist as a band for three years or so. Can you give me your course/history of your band so far?***

Dream Devoid: Thinking of it, I could say that our course as a band, doesn't differ so much from the way other bands follow. We began by giving live performances in several places and then we released our demo on May 1997, which came out at September (of the same year), because we couldn't fund the covers and the production in general. Our first demo ("Nebulous"), after being released, wad a good feedback, as we were informed by the letters we received as well as from reviews and comments of distributors. A reason that helped to that correspondence, was our participation in a CD collection of the Metal Invader magazine (Warzone 2), with the song "Consequent Sins", something that happened completely by accident. Since then, we held some live performances, like one in An club, January 1998 or in Woodstock for the one year of Metal Invader festival. This because we had been voted from the readers of the magazine as one of the five most promising bands of the Hellenic metal scene. Except those two, we have given a number of lives in clubs or school parties in order to spread our music to a bigger number of people. At time speaking, we are recording our second demo, we have recorded the major part of the rhythm guitars and the bass, while the rest of the instruments are going on. On this moment we are trying to improve our work in different ways, such as producing it in a CD, having the CD printed in four-color mode and other improvements. Our target about our music, is to reach as many people as possible. This is the reason we are organizing a tour outside our city. We are planing to visit the northern Hellas along with Disharmony, which is a friendly band, and Grace of Despair, which is a project consisting of members of us and Disharmony

METAL STORM: ***In a way saying, people will hear each band one and a half times.***

Dream Devoid: Yes, by this way we are trying to offer a "filling" pack, worth hearing in every reason. We want to visit many cities of Northern Hellas (Agrinio, Thessaloniki, Ioannina and other).

METAL STORM: ***The following question has to do with your name, "Dream Devoid", meaning absence of dreams. Why is that, does that feeling exist in you and how is it shown in your music?***

Dream Devoid: At our beginning as a band, we had a problem in choosing a name for us. We liked the way it sounded in English, as well as the concept of the title because it means absence of dream, not by the way we dream when we sleep, but with the absence of vision. It suits the age we are living in, along with our lyrics. These are the reasons we liked "Dream Devoid" and kept it as our name. The only problem is the word "Dream" which evokes to someone the thought of "Dream Theater" and their clones, to progressive bands, something that we are not. We try to be technical, but we are not playing progressive.

METAL STORM: ***Can you give me a description of your lyrics?***

Dream Devoid: Our lyrics don't refer to fantasy or historical times, they are about everyday life, passed through an esoteric way of the one who writes them, how someone lives a situation in his life. They aren't direct, someone has to hear the, and understand them after spending some thought on them.

METAL STORM: ***As someone can hear, you touch musically many aspects of metal music, giving a variety to your compositions.***

Dream Devoid: This aspect is quite true. As many who have heard our present recordings, stated this occurs more in our second demo. We started as playing, and we still are playing power, but not with the usual way, which reminds of the German scene, Gamma Ray for example. We try to have our own way by having dark references now and then. I would say that "power" as a term reduces the whole situation. I could characterize our music as technical power, having added other influences. We have achieved to listen to many species of metal and this is being reflected to our music where we use technical heavy metal as a basis, and then we let other things to come in, creating a good result. So we have managed to become a unique band, which doesn't reminds to you when you hear us, a famous band of the genre, something that happens with bands inside and outside of Hellas. It's a pity because now we have so many things to hear, so many stuff to influence us and to get something from it. And what we do reacting to that? We copy I. Maiden and J.Priest, giving something predictable, which will sell more, losing the artistic part of being a musician.

METAL STORM: ***Speaking of your second demo, could you tell me something about it?***

Dream Devoid: According to my opinion, we have a very good demo. It has many new elements to us. The first track ("Dreams in void") has keyboards, flutes, female vocals. This happens not because many bands use them, but because they really fit. "Dreams in void" has a melodical part, followed by a classic heavy metal riff giving a 13minuted track with many alternations, cuts and come-backs of the main riff. The we have a track technical, but on the other hand very powerful, with a riff that sticks to your brain ("Dream weaver") and another one ("Leaves of sorrow") which is the darkest composition of us so far. In general our new tracks have larger length, there is a balance between tension/power and melody while we play better now, together as a band. We hope to achieve many of our goals from this demo.

METAL STORM: ***Talking about your songs, I'd like to ask you something that is always a matter of questioning among bands. Should every band have someone who has a leading role inside it, or they can decide altogether?***

Dream Devoid: In general, I believe that there is not a group that everyone composes or decides with an equal percentage. There are differences in how much (the percentage) someone composes, but there is no difference when we have to decide something. I believe everyone should agree, not because of a wrong perception of democracy, but because when you don't want to do something, then it is sure that you will do it faulty, and you won't like it, so you will get bored with it. The way we compose songs, has to do with that way of thinking. I, mainly, give a guitar riff, and then everybody composes something with his instrument. Then we decide if his ideas fit in the song and we continue or make it over again. If someone is doing the whole work in the song-writing, the fans know what to expect from him, so we have better conditions concerning the economy (a firm can know how much every record is going to sell, and a fan what is going to be heard, without any surprises), but I don't like it. Every song I've written would have been a lot poorer if no one had given his own element in it.

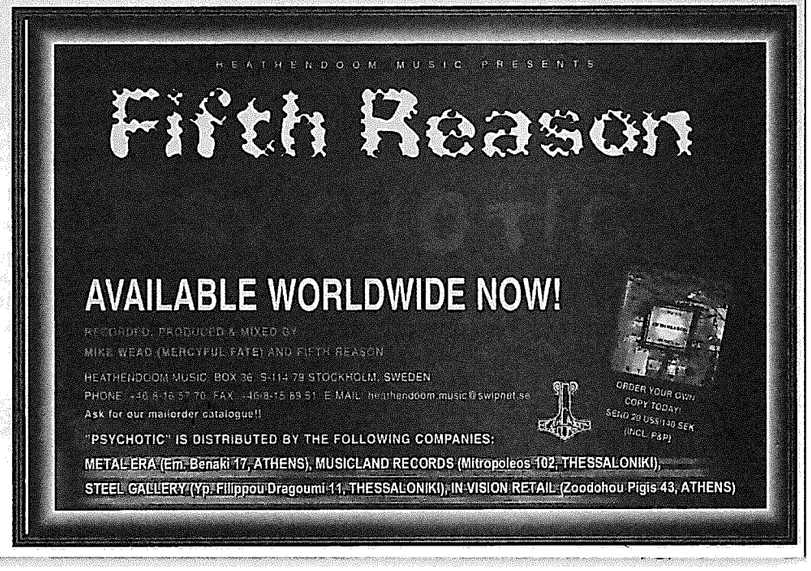
METAL STORM: ***Now, let's talk about live's. As a band you give live shows, but without having a "let's play wherever we can"- way of thinking. Can you describe me the preparations you make and under which conditions you do a live show?***

Dream Devoid: Lives are treated as a very important matter for us. When you do a live, you get a different feeling, and so does the public. Metal, as much as rock in general, is made to be heard live. Now if a band can't give a fairly notable live, it simply doesn't deserve at all. With a computer, a good studio and a big budget, someone nowadays can create nearly everything, the challenge is to have the ability to play something on stage. When we begun, as a band we played anywhere we could (in schools, etc). Now we try not to act this way, not because we don't like it but because mostly the conditions we have to face are miserable. So as a result music is "killed". You can't give to your audience an idea of your music. That's why we try to play in clubs where something good can be heard. We don't want "the best" equipment, but just the ability to give an idea of your music to someone who doesn't know anything about us. We cope with lives as something very important. That's why we do a lot of performing before them, and we try to prepare them as good as possible.

METAL STORM: ***My next question is about the press, and about the zines more specific. Do you believe that they help a band to evolve and become known or an underground band is forced to become known only to a certain public (friends, local scene)?***

Dream Devoid: After an interview on an English speaking 'zine, we received some letters all over the world of people who wanted to hear something from us. The part about the zines that I like, is that they are very similar to the mind and thoughts of the listener. They consist of fans, so they give the same money and have the same expectations from a record they hear as every fan. so they can express a better opinion. On the other hand, they have a knowledge of the scene they are writing about. The #disefect# of this is that sometimes their mind "sticks" to a specific part of our music denying everything which doesn;t belong to it. For an example: "I like epic-power metal and so everything non-epic or non-power (death, black etc) is awful and we won't write anything about it."

NGD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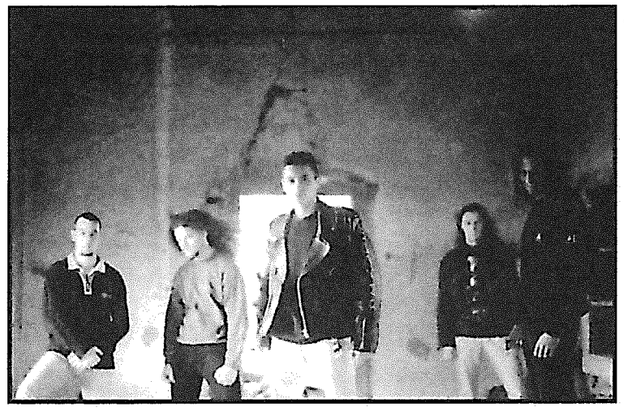
LEPROSY

Something that I liked about Leprosy's demo, "Liel" was that although I'm not a fan of their style, I really liked the demo because it was clear to my ears as well as brutal. Meeting later the band I've seen that it consists of people willing to work in order to achieve their goals, although yet on their first steps in the scene. Enjoy.

METAL STORM: ***Please tell me some stuff about the past of the band.***

Leprosy: The band begun back in '96, under the name "Udo Divina", having released a demo with this name, named "Divine Guidance" having only this song. There were only three members I on vocals, Manolis on Guitars, Alexandros playing drums, we were helped back then by Dimitris from Descend. Then the two other guys came Kostas (Rhythm) and Dimitris (Bass). We released our demo "Liel" (under the name Leprosy, of course).



METAL STORM: ***Up to now, how has press and fans reacted to this demo.***

Leprosy: Everyone who has heard it up to now, has expressed positive views, I could say that reactions are very good up to now... About the press we've been reviewed by the local press, having good comments and grades.

METAL STORM: ***A question we always ask as a 'zine. Suppose that there was a fan who had never heard totally anything of you and about you. How would you describe your music to him?***

Leprosy: I can't say anything! Someone must hear us in order to move on to his conclusions. I've asked many listeners of us to give out some comparisons or similarities, but none could tell me anything!... I'd say that we have our own personal style.

METAL STORM: ***So we can't name some people as your influences...***

Leprosy: I don't know, we've been influenced by Cannibal, Obituary but not something specific.

METAL STORM: ***So we can say that you belong to the death genre?***

Leprosy: Death/Thrash...

Kostas: With some/few black metal elements.

METAL STORM: ***Another question we always ask, is how you feel about the I. Maiden reunion. I believe it's against small bands because everyone will spent time with them, while on the other hand they have nothing new to offer.***

Leprosy: No, I deny. I believe it was about time. I've been to a concert of them with Bayley, the guy really made me mad, but nothing to be compared with Dickinson. He is a guarantee for the future. I also don't believe the rumors about doing it for money or so, I don't believe they need them after all. (ngd: Although I disagree, I pass over to another question, It's not all about Maiden after all.)

METAL STORM: ***As far as I know, you are in search of a record company, can you tell me about it.***

Leprosy: We've send our work to many labels (Cacophonus, Nuclear Blast, Black Lotus, Metal blade). For the time being we have received positive answers and we are waiting to do something with Century Media. The negotiations are being held by our members who study in Britain, so I can't tell everything.

METAL STORM: ***What are your beliefs about using female vocals in Death metal? As I can remember you use female vocals on the first track and on the one before the last (Divine Guidance). I believe that in the former they didn't match while on the latter the fitted better.***

Leprosy: Concerning us, it was something stupid to do. We used them and what we had as a result was awful. It is the major defect of the demo, and we will not do this again in the future. About the song you mentioned, "Divide Guidance", we have it recorded with male vocals also, in our previous demo and I like it more in such way.

METAL STORM: ***So in general you are positive to such a use of female vocals?***

Leprosy: I am to where it fits in case you want to create atmosphere or something. But in the way we play, it's different I don't believe they have place, as well as the use of keyboards.

METAL STORM: ***As I don't have the lyrics now, I would like you to talk to me about them in each track and the feelings you want to express through them.***

Leprosy: The first track is about the feelings of the human being in some situations. "Malediction" is about someone who sees that his death is approaching. What he thinks and how the faces some situations. "Liel" is about a form of sickness- a disease. We've seen about it in television (ngd Triantafilopoulos castings), when someone is suffering from it, he sees his body rotting-while on the same time his mind remains intact. It's a very rare disease in which the ill lives to see parts of his amputated. "Crossing the line" is written by our drummer, he was very furious with someone and decided to use his energy in writing this track. Pretty much the same happens with "2 you", it's about a person who is behaving "asshole-ish"

METAL STORM: ***So in general we could say that you've faced many times this kind of behavior as a group.***

Leprosy: No, it has to do with the way our drummer thinks and behaves, he gets really pissed sometimes and he depicts that in his songs.

METAL STORM: ***Next question is about your preferences in the death metal scene. Are you supporting the Swedish scene (NWOFSDM) of the American one? In other ways Sweden or Florida?***

Leprosy: Florida, Morbid Angel, Cannibal Corpse, such stuff. I liked the Swedish at the beginning but now most bands are similar to one-another. It's a kind of fashion that sometime it will wear off.

METAL STORM: ***Something stated by Sadistic Noise (a band in our issue— the interviews were near each other), that fans of death metal are really fanatic to what the hear and attached to the scene?***

Leprosy: I believe this is what happens.

METAL STORM: ***So it's better to have few full of fanaticism, and not many not so much...***

Leprosy: Yes, few and good.

METAL STORM: ***Can you talk to me about your lives, and the situation in general?***

Leprosy: First I have to speak about the need of more places where a band can play, here in Hellas. We have very few and bands can't show their music to the public. It's very difficult for a band to play and this thing must be altered, we are in a not so good position in comparison with the rest of Europe. Here you have to search more in order to play, you have to know the scene.

METAL STORM: ***Is it easy to you to give a live, would you go wherever asked?***

Leprosy: I don't know what someone might say, but just for the thrill of the moment and to see people banging their heads, I would do so. We were really happy to see people who weren't suppose to know our songs, not only to bang, but knowing our lyrics and singing with us! Of course they liked the covers we play, but in no way we would expect people totally irrelevant with the death metal scene, to bang and sing along with us. We played recently as a support to Malevolent Creation it was our biggest gig up to now according to the number of people in the club as well as their correspondence.

METAL STORM: ***So I could say that this is something that gives to a band the courage to go on...***

Leprosy: For sure, it's the feedback of the fans.

METAL STORM: ***Who do you consider as major personalities in death metal?***

Leprosy: Alex Buster and all of Cannibal Corpse, Chuck, Grabed/morbid

METAL STORM: ***And what about your underground contacts.***

Leprosy: We don't have many. We haven't given the proper time for this subject. We only know few bands, one of them I'll speak about is "Deep Pain" whom I believe can become very successful, playing death-core.

METAL STORM: ***What's your opinion about the major enemies of the Hellenic metal scene...***

Leprosy: Death to the bastards!

METAL STORM: ***I meant the army service and ove studying in order to enter University.***

Leprosy: It's good to have some dreams in life, but that's not everything and nothing after! No one should forget that there are other things important as well. About the army service, if we have a good label-contact provided I, will desert my army service. No way!

METAL STORM: ***Let's talk now about your next record can you tell us some stuff about it?***

Leprosy: It has about 8 to 9 songs and is about more death/thrash forms than our previous one. We don't use any keyboards or female vocals, becoming more brutal. The lyrics are once more personal, many bad things happened to us. A cousin of me died in a fire and this affected the lyrics I wrote, as my feelings are depicted there. The most probable title will be "And so we die", containing all the bad incidents that occurred to us. In the middle of July we will be again in studio recording it.

METAL STORM: ***Will it be self financed or will you sign up with a company/distributor?***

Leprosy: We have found some distributors, but I can't tell names for sure. All the expenses will be payed from us...

METAL STORM: ***End the interview as you like.***

Leprosy: Hope that we will have a good demo now, that the results will be what we want. I also want to thank all those who wrote to us, in order to get our first release.

DIMITRIOS MISTRIOTIS
PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

Rotting Christ

Sure many of you reading this 'zine, have heard of Rotting Christ. They are the most known band from our country, having passed from being one of the bands who started black metal in general, passing now to more atmospheric fields. Two days after their concert in Athens, having something more then pain to my neck from banging around, their guitarist Costas talks about their tour, new album and the band in general.

METAL STORM: ***I would firstly like to ask you about your previous tour (which just ended), to tell me your impressions and experiences.***

Rotting Christ: The tour went on well, nearly every show was sold out, while we played in larger places. Many people came to see the groups, of course and many to see us, while we were the ones who attracted different audience. You know, we were with Deicide e and Ancient Rites, who belong more to the death genre, "" We had very good dates: our show in London which was sold out one week before it, we had great shows in Poland as well as in Germany. It was a good tour in general.

METAL STORM: ***About London, many say that it's a difficult country (Great Britain, in general), how many people were there?***

Rotting Christ: At about one thousand or more. We played in a good spot (London Astoria 2), they had to cut more tickets than those firstly printed, others tried to sell some illegally etc.

METAL STORM: ***Something else I want to ask is if you had problems playing in Scandinavia, because as R.C. had mentioned in a previous interview had faced many difficult situations there: threats people ignoring you because of your origin and stuff like that.***

Rotting Christ: No, I wouldn't say that we had such problems at all. Back in '96 with Samael and Moonspell, we played only once in Norway, Sweden and Finland. We've played many times in Denmark, talking about Scandinavia. On the contrary (of facing problems) we have very good correspondence there, especially in Sweden where we have good selling rates. The only differentiation is that people in Norway are into Norwegian black metal mostly, and we hear a bit strange to their ears; nothing more than that. About other problems, we didn't had any, except a couple of threatening letters, to which we simply don't care.

METAL STORM: ***As we know, you are the only European band that has played in Ankara, the capital of Turkey.***

Rotting Christ: Yes, we were the first to go and play there. Some bands had visited Constantinoupole, but not something important. We helped to "open" the market of Turkey. As you know they were as we were ten-fifteen years before: lives only from very famous names, only now and then-strictly occasional. As Sodom opened the Hellenic market, by playing here back in '88, we opened the market there. Now groups as Samael, Kreator visit Turkey, nearly every group visiting Hellas, has the opportunity now to go there. It's good that we are some of those who did this, because we have an established name and reputation. Of course we weren't the only ones woring in such direction, we had the aid of promoters and people who had worked in the past in Germany or elsewhere. The positive, as I' b said, is that the whole market has opened.

METAL STORM: ***Did you had positive resonance, and in general how people acted to you concerning that you are from Hellas?***

Rotting Christ: Extremely positive, I can say. It's one of the lives I'll remember: not because of the good organization of the show, because the whole preparation was amateurish - they tried to give the best they could, but they were far away from our standards, standards needed for a propel live. The people reacted well, they were warm - extremely warm. There weren't any problems or anything relating with the fact that we are from Hellas. People don't have any problems, the problems are strictly political, nothing to do with the people. We appeared in many TV broadcasts for interviews, where we were being telephoned from the whole country.

METAL STORM: ***A last question about live performing, many bands in the local press state that we are one of the best "crowds"/audiences around. I personally believe they do so to flatter us, what's your opinion about that, and about the live which was held here two days before?***

Rotting Christ: They do so. When you are in a country, you "must" say some good stuff for the supporters there, for many reasons. In Hellas there is a really good audience, a very good market as well as being a warm audience. That warmth, you know shouting, head-banging, singing etc, make a band perform really better. To say the truth we are not the only ones who act this way! In Turkey for example everybody sung everything I played on guitar - something very extreme... About the audience here it's one of the best available and the live (the one two days before) was good.

METAL STORM: ***Listening to your albums, I'd say that "Triarchy of the lost lovers" was very different from the previous ones. "A dead poem" and "Triarchy..." were very different but "Sleep of the angels" didn't seem so far away from "A dead..." as the steps which we're made before. (previous - "Triarchy..." / "Triarchy"-"... poem"). Should I say that this is the way R.C. will sound in the future?***

Rotting Christ: No, I don't think so. But let's start this over: the first major step was made after "Triarchy...", it was the time when we started being different from our past, different that the Hellenic sound, you know like "Thy mighty...". One factor with helped this is that we signed with Century Media, the recordings were done outside Hellas, the whole thing was more professional and in general someone could say that the band could give their best while working. When we try to give a new release, we just give out our inspirations. We don't "copy" other releases of us, because they sold many copies or because the fans would want us to do so. We want to give some compositions of good quality, something people are going to appreciate and then to experiment musicaly. If someone doesn't do experiments, you don't have anything new to offer, so repetition begins and nothing is being done musically as well as people start to abandon you. We also want to reach more people with every release. "Triarchy..." was a black metal album. All the melodies there, the whole feeling were like "Non Serviam" and "Thy mighty...". The production wasn't as good as the latest two. "A dead poem" came out to be more heavy more commercial, it wasn't intended to do so, it just happened. "Sleep.. " keeps the elements of it's predecessor, but if someone listens carefully to it, he will hear that it isn't like "A dead poem", the gothic parts of it don't exist there. Even to the faster songs of it - written as a tribute to the older sup
porters of us- like "the worls" have some new elements. I believe it is a step to something better. As we can see the selling rates in Europe were very good: in one-month time it sold as much as "A dead poem" at all. Here in Hellas it will pass over this limit soon. About America, we are getting bigger there, not something tremendous, but we are getting bigger.[it's the point where I ask about economical problems with C.M. he answers about where the money of the sales go...]

METAL STORM: ***A question we always ask as a zine: Say that you had a listener in front of you, who knew nothing about R.C. how would you describe your music to him? You've stated in the past that you play all genres of metal music, passed through your own prism, now?***

Rotting Christ: Are you talking about a metal fan, not every one who listens to music? I would say that our records are very "strong" and can be heard by a large number/variety of people. The metalhead can find elements he likes, the gothster can also find elements that suit to him. While "tus" is a bit gothic, "Victoriatus" is a pure heavy metal track, the riffs the lines, anything. You can find black metal parts, fast parts, atmospheric parts. I believe that this record ("Sleep...") has many atmospheric elements. Concluding I believe that everyone who will listen to the album, will find something that he likes, he may not like is as a whole, but will sure find parts of it that he likes.

METAL STORM: ***Let's talk about the single of "Sleep...", "Die Perfekte Traum". I'd say that it has many good and many bad elements. Firstly it's duration is long, it has a large number of songs (for a single release and for such a price), but on the other hand the live versions of your songs are pretty awful. What's your opinion?***

Rotting Christ: About the live versions, the were recorded during the "Triarchy of the lost lovers" period back in 1996. They don't represent the band now, because we used in them many session musicians, so this isn't the way we play. We wanted to give a single release of the "Sleep..." album, we chose "Die Perfekte..." and "Moonlight", which although is a good track, isn't included in our album because it doesn't match /suit with the rest of the songs there. About the other (live) songs, it was a decision made by our company. I think, concluding that we have a really filling pack, at such a low price. That's why here in Athens for example, the first batch of it was sold out, and then they ordered it again, as it happened in other places in Europe also.

METAL STORM: ***As someone can see in your last record you have many alternations: tracks with different speed, different style, something that doesn't happen with other groups. (which give out an LP where the tracks are pretty much the same)***

Rotting Christ: We didn't want our album to be flat. "Dead Poem" was a bit flat, there is a standard way of playing the songs, more rhythmic, more dance. At the last album, we combine many different styles of music and that's why we have such a difference. Thats why we have such alternations and differences. You can see a track starting dynamically, and then being rhythmic, atmospheric and such. We worked in this direction and we hope we did it well.

METAL STORM: ***Talking about the Hellenic audience, there is the opinion (something that might have been expressed by R.C. in the past), that in order to be famous in Hellas, you must***

firstly get successful abroad.

Rotting Christ: Yes, this is true. That's what happened with us. We first had a European tour, international success and then some feedback occurred in Hellas. The "outbreak" was made with "A Dead Poem", back in '97. It's when we started to have more sales, better live appearances, we played in Rhodon club with a large audience. I don't know, this might be a problem , prejudice of the audience in our country....

METAL STORM: ***Is it maybe because you are very easy to be seen and met here, so there is not a myth around you, as it happens with other bands (who can't be met easily because they live abroad)?***

Rotting Christ: It might be that. They can see me in a magazine or playing live, but they can also see me drinking coffee in many places. Also as it happens with fans who have communicated with me, I've seen and talked with most of them. But on the other hand, the myth is destroyed. They can't see us as their metal-idol, but in a more friendly phase/way.

METAL STORM: ***Do you believe that you can spread to a bigger audience here in Hellas. It seems to me that whenever I visit a club for a live, I see the same faces.***

Rotting Christ: Metal in Hellas passed a large crisis. People were attracted to different kinds of music. But I believe that the last two years we have a large expansion. I have seen many new faces around.

METAL STORM: ***I agree, but I believe that this happens only with bands such as Maiden, Gamma Ray, and large names in general.***

Rotting Christ: No, it also happens to us: The bands you mentioned play for many years. A 30 year old fan will visit Maiden for example, thats why you see different faces. But with us it's different. This happens because we became known here two years before. So how can a man with 30 years of age to know about us and listen to us? So we will gather people of young age.

METAL STORM: ***Can you compare the people here with those abroad. Why do they run after this folk kind of music here, not listening to metal or to other ways of music? Is there the same phenomenon abroad?***

Rotting Christ: There is not such a folk way of playing there. In London for example, people may not be metal, but they are into everything extreme. You can become famous and sell anytime, no matter what kind of music you play. People like everything in extreme music there. I've seen people with 80 years of age in a live appearance of us, as well as people of 40 or so years of age. I don't see many low-aged there. Here we have a big problem with the army service. For two years you are out of everything, while on the other hand you are forced to live in a different way. You get out of the whole rock-metal way. They have your hair cut, you are wearing a suit act the way they want, and obey in general. They get you out of your way of living and when you come back, you are very tired of beginning again, so you follow the mass. Of course it seems difficult for me to accept someone abandoning his ideas and ways...

METAL STORM: ***Is it maybe because he never believed in them truly?***

Rotting Christ: It might be, but this way or another, I think army is one of the major problems.

METAL STORM: ***My last question is about the subject discussed these days in the metal scene: the reunion of Iron Maiden. I believe that the will get us back to an 80's feeling, while on the other hand they'll push down smaller band. A fan who would go and buy a CD of yours for example, now will get a "new Maiden" instead, leaving away other smaller bands. What's your opinion?***

Rotting Christ: No,. I don't agree. Someone may go an buy a CD of Maiden and after some time of listening, a CD of ours can be bought or anything.

METAL STORM: ***I mean that I don't like the whole reunion feeling around. They don't have to offer anything except better selling rates. Do you believe that they have something good to give out or to open new ways in our music, as they did to the past?***

Rotting Christ: Yes, the difference with Maiden is that they broke when they still had many to offer back then. So I believe they can offer more to the metal music. Dickinson always tried to reach new ways of progress and now he will be able to do it better. He is very open minded. Of course they need a good producer. In every way I'll try to be in their first live in Paris (9th of September).

NGD

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BANDS, LABELS, 'ZINES AND GOOD LOOKING GROUPIES KEEP SENDING PROMOS, 'BIOS, NEWS, NAKED PHOTOS etc. for the 2nd issue(English written) to one of the following addresses:

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2.SPIROS BOLAKIS 6 HALEPA str. PERISTERI, 12137 ATHENS, GREECE

Sadistic Noise

Something about the modern music scene that makes me feel furious is the whole "reunion" style, with people who sell their past and name in order to gain some more of that green paper, and companies having more cheap advertising. That's the reason I believed that "A decade in grave" would be an awful-boring album. Fortunately I was wrong. Here we have to do with a piece of raw death metal, blowing your ears as the releases of the previous decades, with it's brutality and whole feeling. So here is the interview with their guitarist/vocals letting us know more about the band.

METAL STORM: ***Your new record ("A decade...") has been out for quite some time, so concerning this, and that the reactions of the press were positive, I'd like to ask you about the reactions of the public: of people who have heard it, sales figures, etc...***

Sadistic Noise: The record, although is officially out for 3 months, practically it's out only for a month or so. That's because it was released just before Xmas. Thinking of it, the reactions are good for the moment, while the demand has started to increase outside Athens, in not places reached on the official release. I believe that they are satisfied from it. The reactions are quite good, concerning that not a single copy has been sold now (ngd: at the time of the interview) abroad.

METAL STORM: ***You have been proposed to give some live shows abroad, can you tell me where and when you are going to play?***

Sadistic Noise: We have received proposals from Germany and Holland. Because we have problems transporting there and because we work, we can't find "free" time to go there and play. That's why I can't tell you much at the moment simply because we have to many prepositions and many and different bands to choose from (for example Nocturnal Breed, Marduk). Until thinks are more stable we can't decide or say anything.

METAL STORM: ***"Decade..." is a pure death album. I want to ask you, why didn't you choose to add other elements in your music, as other bands do, such as female vocals, keyboards. Instead you chose to be traditional, why?***

Sadistic Noise: Concerning the keyboards, we had a great dispute inside the band. Our bass-player voted for keyboards, while I, against. The reason we concluded in not using them, is because we as a band, are friends of the metal music, as it was being played a decade before (Possessed, Celtic Frost and such). We like keyboards, but we didn't use them because we wanted a work to sound as if it had been released in the mid 80's. This is the reason why the production is raw. We wanted to act as if we were in the mid 80's, this is why we didn't use them. Concerning the female vocals, I have to say that we may use keyboards sometime, but we will never use female vocals.

METAL STORM: ***There are rumors about your video. Will it be made, when?***

Sadistic Noise: In the next 10 days...

METAL STORM: ***What so extreme is going to be there?***

Sadistic Noise: The scenario is written by the bass-player of the band, who has graduated from a film making school. The track will probably be "Armageddon". It's about things that are extreme about the fear of Armageddon, the fears of apocalypse and so on. What is going to be shown is not sure at the moment, but there will be extreme parts, shown extreme parts on screen. I don't know know the whole concept will go on, if it will be accepted, if we are forced to cut parts of it because of censorship...

METAL STORM: ***OK, thanks, we might have the chance to see it before our zine is going to be released, so we shall know by then... Your title "A Decade in grave", has to do with this, your lyrics and attitude?***

Sadistic Noise: No, it's more about about the ten (truly eleven) years of existence but and of our non-participation on the scene. Somehow we were inside a grave and now zombies
are out! The lyrics are about other themes.

METAL STORM: ***You had released a 7" (1993) in the past, are there any songs of it in the album?***

Sadistic Noise: Nope...

METAL STORM: ***So as you have some material not released in an album form, will they be used in a next recording, or you will go on to other stuff?***

Sadistic Noise: The material we have

is not enough, and as we have seen, we are able tocreate new compositions, so we will not use the rest material, instead we will create new. We had many ideas all those years to materialize so we will proceed on them, instead of using old material.

METAL STORM: ***Will there be any live appearances here, in Hellas?***

Sadistic Noise: Yes, we will play with Rotting Christ in Chalkis, while there are some other shows to be programmed, but nothing certain at the moment.

METAL STORM: ***Concerning the lyrics, tell me with which subjects you're occupied to?***

Sadistic Noise: We are referring to anti-religious subjects. Someone may ask, why we are doing this, while so many thousands of bands do the same. The reason is because we simply believe that religion causes fear to people, we should consider the leader of the Church here in Hellas, from him we can see that people have a tendency to go back to this king of way and believes: they have Christianism deeply inside them, they're afraid while can't understand that a man can be alone a god, so we are proceeding back to the middle-ages. This way isn't acceptable to us, this is the way we are using our lyrics as a weapon against Christianism, who has caused so much disaster to humanity. We don't accept Satanism as Church presents it, they present it this way because they are afraid of it — the power a man can posses...

METAL STORM: ***You mean the ability of a man to be god himself?***

Sadistic Noise: This is the stuff our lyrics are about, more then that we really believe something.

METAL STORM: ***So you are dissatisfied with religion,***

Sadistic Noise: Yes we are. We have seen what Christianity has done to humanity. We have seen the large stomachs of the (Christian) priests, the golden crosses they were, while at the same time criticizing us for our behavior. We believe these should be abolished, once and for all.

METAL STORM: ***It's true that priests are growing fatter and larger, while their followers thinner and lighter from fasting. (ngd: don't know exactly, not eating meat or other food for several days)***

Sadistic Noise: Exactly, we believe that man is the god and that Satanism presents that from the fall of Lucifer from paradise we can learn that someone can be strong through denial and live alone. This is the deeper meaning, it's a long conversation of course.

METAL STORM: ***So you are more anti-religious, if you were composing in Turkey (for example) you'd simply change the names.***

Sadistic Noise: Maybe so, maybe we write something about Muslims.

METAL STORM: ***Ancient Rites did this, and it sounded really good.***

Sadistic Noise: We may do this, but this is not our primal target at the moment. Christianity has so many problems.

METAL STORM: ***This release fulfilled some dreams of you as a band, you want to achieve more?***

Sadistic Noise: You know that by starting something, you start to want more and more. From nowhere, we started coming to the scene again. Firstly, we just wanted the record to be released. Then it became different, live prepositions, video clip, etc so we want to do more.

METAL STORM: ***So we will wait more to come from Sadistic Noise, not a behavior of: We couldn't record something, we gave out a record and now we will stop.***

Sadistic Noise: Basically, this is the way we had in mind, since producing this release, but the reactions of the people make us to continue. Now that we are making money, but it's encouragement.

METAL STORM: ***Do you believe that press has helped you on this spot?***

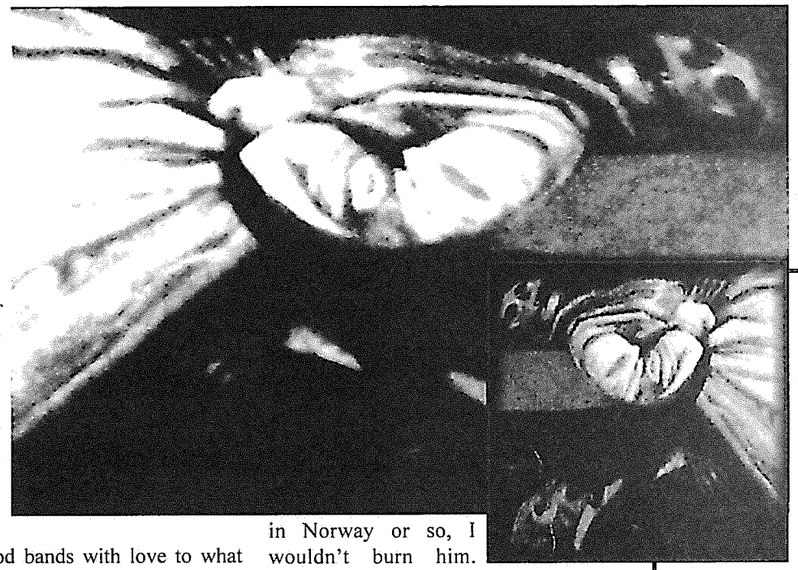
Sadistic Noise: Press always helps, when a band is going out and you see it's name printed in a cover, an interview, it's something that helps. If there wasn't press, many bands wouldn't exist.

METAL STORM: ***A question we always do. Suppose that you are talking to someone who doesn't know anything about Sadistic Noise: no music, no interview, no review. What would you say to him, in order to hear and get your record?***

Sadistic Noise: I'd ask him if he likes death metal, if yes, I'd offer it to him, if not, I wouldn't.

METAL STORM: ***Simply that, death do the bone?***

Sadistic Noise: Of course! We are not close-minded, we hear many genres of metal but death is want we like most.



METAL STORM: ***Talking about other genres of metal, your opinion?***

Sadistic Noise: They're good! In every aspect there are good bands with love to what they're doing and creating nice results. Of course there are many who don't act truly, and will have to stop sometime in the near future. I can't say when "near future" will be, but it has happened before. Many bands start to play, and when the scene faces a small decline, only the true ones stay and continue. I know but the market will sometime face a decline and then we will see what will remain.

METAL STORM: ***So it's an easy thing for a death band to stay in the scene now-days, or not? Or it's easy to start but difficult to stay?***

Sadistic Noise: In the death scene, the fans are few, but very fanatic. In a way that they may change (others come and go), but they are always fanatic. Some have said that death, died. This didn't happen as we can see from bands, such as Morbid Angel, who continue to give pieces of their work.

METAL STORM: ***I now have to ask another hypothetical question. There are many bands in the metal scene, giving religious messages with their songs, while you anti-religious. Suppose you were facing Savior Machine, what would you say to them? How you feel that you have to co-exist with them?***

Sadistic Noise: About the band you referenced, I don't consider them metal at all. About some others, "Cut the crap" and nothing else. People have suffered enough from those crap, and I would talk about it. Nothing to do with the troubles in Norway or so, I wouldn't burn him. About the band you asked I'd like to know how he wears that diamond on his head. I just have some aspects about life, passing them through my music. I don't title my music, it's death metal and just that.

METAL STORM: ***A last question, how much does press help a listener to decide? Is press a good influence?***

Sadistic Noise: Metal has evolved in such a way that you can't reach the whole scene and know about every band. So press helps you in order to choose.

NGD

SADISTIC NOISE

"A Decade In Grave"

As I've mentioned before, "A decade..." is a brutal death record which surely belongs to the previous decade musically as well as lyrically. I really prefer it from other "re-unions" or clones coming up every day. Tracks I like from "Decade...": "Armagedon", "When the sun the sun turns black".

17/20

NGD

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STIGMATA IV

Austria is a country with beautiful landscape (mountains, snow and stuff like that) but we are not used in the idea of a heavy metal group from this country. Well, one of the bands that is an exception to the rule (among some others) is Stigmata IV one of the bands that with their second album ("The court of eternity") manage to create something special.

METAL STORM: ***Hi... Are you satisfied with the sales of your new album "The courtof eternity"?***

Stigmata IV: Yes! Our new album is going very good in sales, much more in the first month than what we had with our debut album ("Solum mente Infirmis"). Noise records is supporting us with full power - we are very happy.

METAL STORM: ***"Stigmata" is a Hellenic word. Why did you chose it for the name of the band and why did you changed it to "Stigmata IV"?***

Stigmata IV: : I think the name is very relative to the music because our lyrics are talking about the wounds of life and the reason we choose "IV" is because we are four musicians and a guy in Germany had a band in the 80's called "Stigmata". Our manager called to his label and they told him: "Oh, it's OK, the band does not exist anymore.". Two weeks later his lawyer send us a letter asking for a lot of money to keep the name. So we changed it to "Stigmata IV".

METAL STORM: ***What about your influences as musicians?***

Stigmata IV: : As you know today we played a cover from I. Maiden ("22 Acasia Avenue"), last time we were in Hellas we played Black Sabbath ("Heaven and hell"). We like this kind of bands. Also we love Rush, Savatage, etc.

METAL STORM: ***In the last few years, there it has been noticed that power-progressive metal scene is getting stronger with a lot of bands playing this type of music. Do you believe that the metal fan is getting tired listening to this style?***

Stigmata IV: : Oh, I think it depends from the bands, from the music. About the work of each band - it has to be very interesting and when a band has it's own style then for the fun it's very interesting too.

METAL STORM: ***What about your country, Austria, is there a metal scene?***

Stigmata IV: : There is no scene, our metal scene is very small.

METAL STORM: ***So do you think that you have to represent something from your country to the world metal scene?***

Stigmata IV: : I don't think so, because there is no Austrian metal style so we try to make our music as good as we can and we are surely inspired by classical composers but I think we play for ourselves, of course we are proud that we are coming from Austria, we are of the new bands of our metal scene and we will continue to play because we want to.

METAL STORM: ***Do you agree with some metal bands which make metal synonymous with political and religious ideas?***

Stigmata IV: : I think that rock music has protested against something and we try to say to the fan what's not right. We don't expect the people to say "oh, we don't do this anymore" so we just don't want to effect the people with our show and with our music. So we don't see preachers or something like that as very important.

METAL STORM: ***Which do you believe are the three most important songs in the metal history?***

Stigmata IV:

Gunter: I think that "Paranoid" of Black Sabbath is a very important song, "Smoke on the water" from Deep Purple and "Tom Sawer" from Rush. Also "Number of the beast", but there are a lot of important songs not mentioned.

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that metal music is "in fashion" in our days?***

Stigmata IV: I don't think so, because metal never had the room getting very big, like popular music or something like that, I think metal should stay a little bit in the underground because it's "rebel" music.

METAL STORM: ***So you feel it's the revolution of the 20th century?***

Stigmata IV: : I don't think it's the revolution, but it's a good sign that metal is still excising. It's important to have a lot of different styles of music.

METAL STORM: ***Let's get back to the new record. Can you tell us a few words about the lyrics?***

Stigmata IV: : I write about what's not right in this world. The first song "Crusade of lies" is a manipulation song that media strikes manipulate for make them think and to do them what they want and I think that's the red line for all the songs. I'm not able to write some fantastic stories about dragons and swords and stuff like that so we try to keep the lyrics very realistic.

METAL STORM: ***Which is your most crazy dream as a musician?***

Stigmata IV:

Ritchie: I will answer for him! I think his most crazy dream is to stand in an Arena in front of 200.000 people playing guitar solos.

METAL STORM: ***If you weren't a musician, what would you like to be?***

Stigmata IV: : Maybe a politician?

METAL STORM: ***You choose the most fake profession, why?***

Stigmata IV: : If I would be a politician, I would like to be an honest politician, in order to try to change some things.
Gunter: I would like to be a postman (laughs),
Ritchie: It's my job!!!

METAL STORM: ***What's your opinion about the fanzines?***

Stigmata IV: It's very important for the metal scene because big magazines, especially in Germany, don't have enough space for all those new-coming bands and the fanzines are so important because they make interviews with one or up to three even five members of a band and the fan can create his own image of a band. They ask, most of the time, very interesting questions because they have more time to listen to the records; that's so important.

METAL STORM: ***Have you ever played live in Germany?***

Stigmata IV: Yes

METAL STORM: ***I'm asking you because there is a dispute between the Germans and the Austrians.***

Stigmata IV: It's not a real hate, it's like a big and a small brother, so I think most of the people when we were playing in Germany, didn't know that we were an Austrian band and it's not so important to us to say: "We are Austrians". We are just a band and we try to play music as good as we can, as loud as we can, as powerful as we can, that's what we try to do. There is of course some pressure between Austria and Germany; I don't think it matters anyway.

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that metal unites the nations?***

Stigmata IV: Yes, because it's worldwide and when you listen to the music, you don't think about the origin of the band, you just listen to their music.

METAL STORM: ***Do you know anything about Hellenic metal bands or Hellas in general?***

Stigmata IV: About Hellenic bands, unfortunately not. About Hellas you've got to ask the other guys: They are almost every summer in Hellas for holidays. It's a lovely country with great history and nice people.

METAL STORM: ***Have you done anything in your life you are proud of it?***

Stigmata IV: I'm proud that we are here. You know, for an Austrian band it's not so easy to sign in a German label and to be set on tour. So for that we are very happy and very proud for it.

METAL STORM: ***Do you feel that from the moment you signed with a German record label, success knocked on your door?***

Stigmata IV: Success is always in front of you. For we are very successful because we play lives in different countries, we have great reactions from the audiences and I think we are successful in our way. We are not a commercial successful band, but it doesn't matter. I think we have to continue to write good albums and maybe someday we'll live from your music.

METAL STORM: ***Do you have an idol in metal music?***

Stigmata IV: I try to be myself, but I would like to be like Bruce Dickinson, Peter Gabriel, Ian Gillan, Ronnie James Dio, almost any from the old singers because they've their own style and a high personality.

METAL STORM: How would you convince a metal fan to listen to Stigmata IV, a fan who never heard of you.

Stigmata IV: If you like hard rock and the old metal bands, like Black Sabbath, you may listen to Stigmata IV because we try to recreate the feeling of those bands.

METAL STORM: ***Finish the interview as you wish...***

Stigmata IV: I want to talk to the Hellenic audience, giving that as a warm welcome and it's always a unique experience to play in front of Hellenic fans. We'll try to come back as soon as possible.

METAL STORM: ***Thank you.***

Stigmata IV: Thank you.

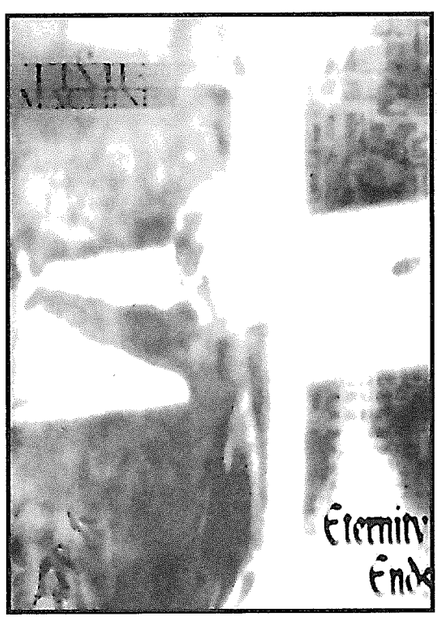
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

TIME MACHINE

Would you like a travel back in past with a time machine? Here we have the Italian progsters ready to guide you in a different world, through their album "Eternity ends". Their leader bass player Lorenzo is speaking to us about the band on the behalf of their concert in Athens with Angra.

METAL STORM: *Hi Lorenzo. First of all congratultions for your new CD, "Eternity Ends". Could you tell us a few things about it?*

Time Machine: OK! We tried to make a concept album about the life of Jesus Christ and the way we believe he died. You know, I believe that Jesus Christ didn't die at the cross, as the priests say, but in Kashmir. It's a big lie from Romeo-catholic Church, and we try to show the real story, about Jesus Christ, cause if you study the bible, you'll see that Christ dies in Kashmir and not on the Cross.



METAL STORM: *Can you tell us the differences between "Eternity Ends" and your former albums?*

Time Machine: I think that "Eternity Ends" is more easy to listen then our former albums, more direct, more catchy, more melodic, technical, less heavy metal.

METAL STORM: *In Progressive metal scene lot's of bands are trying to copy the music of Dream Theater, Fates Warning, Queensryche. On the other hand you try to represent your own identity. Is it hard?*

Time Machine: Look, it's easy to copy the music from a band who is fashionable, trying to sell more records. But if you want to make music just for music you need to have your own identity.

METAL STORM: *In the last few years, there has been an "attack" from Italy to the world-wide metal scene. Many interesting bands are showing great records. What is your comment?*

Time Machine: I don't think that the Italian metal scene is growing. There are few bands, few very good bands but Italian scene is not in general growing very much.

METAL STORM: *But bands like you, Rhapsody, Skylark, Zen, etc. are becoming more known to the fans...*

Time Machine: Few episodes don't make a real establishment. For example Rhapsody: They have a German manager, they record in a German studio, they have a German producer and in such a way they're not pure Italians in their music.

METAL STORM: *What about your past?*

Time Machine: Complicated. Many problems, many ups and downs, that's why we love the kids over here (note: he is talking about the Hellenic fans), because they are not fans, they are friends. Fans leave you when you have problems, but the kids here show us that they are more than fans, they are friends.

METAL STORM: *Which are the problems that Time Machine passed by?*

Time Machine: Line up. We didn't have a stable line up, we never had and I don't believe we will have a stable line up, but we are very much bonded, even when we have people for a few months we are a good band. But the line up problems always affected our work because when we reach a level, we have to stop, go back, get somebody new into the band, explain everything, start working together with a different style - because

we allowed to any new member to bring his own experience, so every time we have to change style as well - that's why all our works sounds different one from another. You can recognize Time Machine's style, but all the other things around change 'cause we change people very often.

METAL STORM: *How would you convince a fan who doesn't know you, to listen to Time Machine?*

Time Machine: It's romantic, progressive rock with heavy metal elements and classical music here and there and a lot of Mediterranean elements.

METAL STORM: *Which, do you think, are the five most promising bands from Italy?*

Time Machine: The usual ones: Rhapsody, I can't say Labyrinth because they changed singer, they have Morby now, Archangel, Drakkar, maybe Skylark...

METAL STORM: *What is your most crazy dream as a musician?*

Time Machine: It's not much, playing a world tour with Angra is enough.

METAL STORM: *So your dream is to play support to Angra...*

Time Machine: I have to be honest, they are better than us, I like them, what can I say?!!

METAL STORM: *How would you like Time Machine to be after ten years?*

Time Machine: I would like to be famous, rich, no! To be Time Machine and stay honest as we have been so far.

METAL STORM: *Are you religious, taking as an example "Eternity Ends"?*

Time Machine: Yes, I am, but I don't think that in our new album I' talking about religious things. In the past, yes, but in "Eternity Ends", I' talking about the spiritual side of religion and the way that Cardinals and Roman catholic Church "guides" the Christians.

METAL STORM: *What do you know about Hellas?*

Time Machine: I know everything I have learned from school. That everything started from here: history, math, physics, etc. Also as I saw, you have a very beautiful country with lovely people and great fans.

METAL STORM: *Can you send a message to your fans as we close this interview?*

Time Machine: Take care, Thank you for the great memories, see you soon.

NIKOS TZOUANNIS / NGD

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WARDOG

The words ain't enough to talk about what Tom Gattis made for heavy metal. Wardog, his latest band has released the third album, "A sound beating", a real anthem of pure metal, an album that lot of fans will love. From the other part of the telephone line, the leader of the band says more about the American metallers and the scene.

Wardog: Hi, Nikos, how are you?

METAL STORM: ***Fine, Thanks. Are you satisfied with your new album?***

Wardog: Well, judging from the reviews, I guess it's OK. I'm only a musician, it's up to you to say, the fans, the press, but it's OK.

METAL STORM: ***Can you tell us in short some things about the past of Wardog?***

Wardog: Well we met each other in the college, we were all going to college in Mexico, so we were a college band, and we decided one day that we wanted to record a CD, so we recorded our self-titled "Wardog", released it and after that we graduated from college and moved to Arizona, where we recorded "Scored Earth". We took the tapes and send them to Michael Senker (?) in Germany. He liked it and a couple of months after, we signed so we had the release of "Scored Earth", around 1996, that went on good. The last thing we did, was to play in the "Heavy Oder Was?" festival, and after that we started recording our CD "A sound Beating". So basically this a quite short story of what we've done as a band.

METAL STORM: ***What do the lyrics say?***

Wardog: The lyrics are just a kind of celebration of what metal is doing over there in Europe, you know like "Welcome to the new underground". "Changing of the Guard" is about the renaissance of metal in Europe right now, which is good. I'm glad that it's happening somewhere and a big part of the album is about the bad times we had during the recording, so that's basically what the lyrics are about.

METAL STORM: ***Why did you decide to have a Hellenic instrument (Buzuki) and Hellenic name in your song "Anatreehastrikos Chaos"?***

Wardog: We had a very good friend named Thanos, who plays fantastic guitar and Buzuki. He came one day, when we were playing the song and said added some parts with that instrument, making the song much more interesting. So we decided to do something different with the song named "Creeping Chaos", as we had a Hellenic instrument, so we changed the name in Hellenic creating a different atmosphere.

METAL STORM: ***Are you satisfied with metal blade?***

Wardog: Yeah, you know they're nice guys, they are a small company, not something like Capital records, so they can't do a great deal, huge management but they're good guys, we work pretty well together.

METAL STORM: ***What are your expectations after the release of "A sound beating"?***

Wardog: I hope to play a lot. Of course I'd like to come to Hellas. I've heard a lot about you, metal is going very well there. Drink some beers and play metal!

METAL STORM: ***Can you tell us a funny story that happened during the recording of your new album?***

Wardog: Oh, I have a very funny story, Chris the bass player, dropped his bass during the recording and "douledmeand pain" and we wad to to take him to the hospital. It was very funny! We made a lot of jokes about the accident. Of course we had equipment blowing up all the time in the studio, it was a nightmare.

METAL STORM: ***I've seen lots of photographs showing you with a "Sacred Steel" t-shirt. What's your relationship with this band?***

Wardog: Oh, they're just good friends of mine. The first time I came in Germany for the "Heavy Oder Was?" festival in 1997, Sacred Steel was the opening band and I sang a song with them on stage. They're very nice guys, that's it.

METAL STORM: ***If you meet someone who had never listened to Wardog, what would you say to him in order to describe the band?***

Wardog: I would describe it, especially this album, as vary basic, you know recording sound not a lot of effects, it's very straight forward. I would describe the music as classical heavy metal sounding, NWOBHM, not totally thrash but not also slow. It's kind of having little bit of both, and I would say that the singing style is real singing, not screams all the time, and a lot of riff-ing, very fast guitar riff-ing. That's the way I would describe it.

METAL STORM: ***In your first song you say: "Welcome to the new underground", is metal underground now and if yes, should it stay this way?***

Wardog: In the time we were recording the CD, metal was underground cause it was building up, but it seems that it's getting more popular, but it's still underground, it certainly is in the States. Anyway, at the time I wrote that song, metal was underground.

METAL STORM: ***So, can you describe us what's happening in the states?***

Wardog: It's pretty bad right now. Of course it's getting better. Iced Earth are on tour now which is a good sign, touring America, so it can't be all that bad. And of course Hammerfall toured very successful America. They didn't play in big places, they played in very small clubs, but it was good.

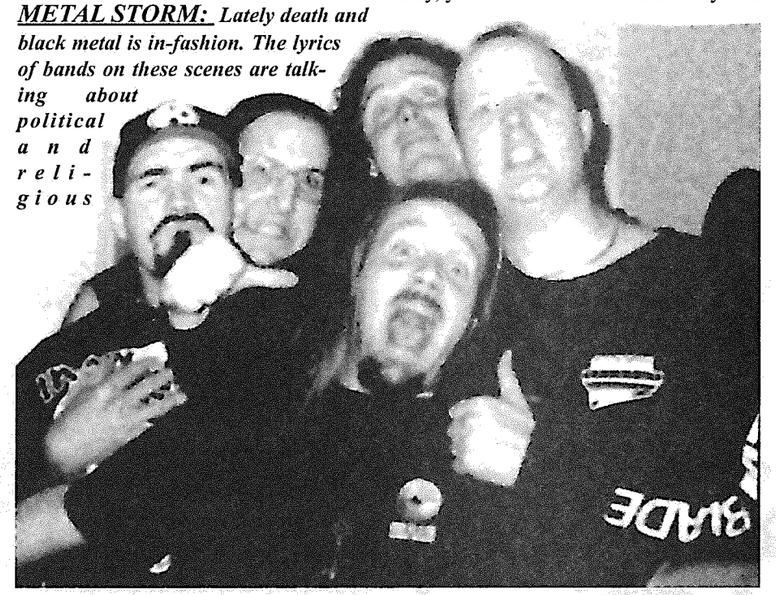
METAL STORM: ***Can you name us some bands that according to you, will reach success in the future?***

Wardog: Probably the ones I named. I think Hammerfall and the people they do their songs. They are very popular and they will be more in the future. Iced Earth is also a very good band.

METAL STORM: ***You are the main composer of Wardog. Do you think that it's good for a band to have one person as a leader?***

Wardog: The strong point is NOT in the music, the strong point is the use of the instruments. Some people play their instrument very well. You know, I'm not the best guitar player in the world, neither the greatest singer but my strong point is that I can write very descent songs, nice compositions the way around it. Basically that's what I do best.

METAL STORM: ***Lately death and black metal is in-fashion. The lyrics of bands on these scenes are talking about political and religious things, are you into it?***



Wardog: No, I don't think so. Of course "C.I.A" is a bit political but on the other hand I don't write politically or at last I don't feel like that. Put it in this way: the politics is not a part of my stage in heavy metal. I'm actually very interested in politics but it has not to do with metal music.

METAL STORM: ***Which are your influences as musician and as a singer?***

Wardog: I used to listen to all the classics like Judas Priest, old Kiss, Udo, old Raven and Tigers of Pan Tang.

METAL STORM: ***A lot of metal musicians told in the past that they don't listen now to heavy metal because they play all the time this music. Are you one of them?***

Wardog: It's true that I have to say it, but I am. That's what I do all the time and I just need some time for my ears to get back to normal. This is too much, but I guess I am like that.

METAL STORM: ***What are your comments about the latest reunions in heavy metal?***

Wardog: I don't think it's right to do it just to make dollars. Of course when you are making music you have to earn money, you have to eat, get a place to stay, you have to live. That's the way it is if you want to do music seriously, not just fuck around like not going on tour. It's fine they're not doing it for money but as far reunions go, and they do it for the music, full on it.

METAL STORM: ***Which was the happiest and which the saddest thing that happened in Wardog?***

Wardog: The happiest thing was the "Heavy oder was?" festival and the worst thing was recording the CD. It was absolutely hell.

METAL STORM: ***Is it easy to live as a musician?***

Wardog: No! I have and another job but sooner or later I have to decide. If I can't make money from music, I'll have to quit.

METAL STORM: ***Can you imagine Wardog after five years? How would you like your band to be?***

Wardog: I hope to play all the time! That's what I love doing.

METAL STORM: ***Would you***

change the style of your music playing in the future?

Wardog: No! I just like heavy metal and I love to play that music but if I did this, I'd change my name because this wouldn't be Wardog of Tom Gattis.

METAL STORM: ***What is your craziest dream as a musician?***

Wardog: Just getting to the next gig without any problems. That's the best dream I can have.

METAL STORM: ***With which band you'd like to play?***

Wardog: Iron Maiden they are my idols.

METAL STORM: ***I'm going to say some words. Make a short comment.Metal blade.***

Wardog: Great guys, good for bands that are signed but maybe not so good for bands that have been around for a while and need the take in their next step, a larger thing.

METAL STORM: ***Wardog.***

Wardog: Un-tapped potential.

METAL STORM: ***Heavy metal.***

Wardog: A lot of things, fun!

METAL STORM: ***Iron Maiden.***

Wardog: True heavy metal.

METAL STORM: ***U.S.A.***

Wardog: Trendy.

METAL STORM: ***Tom.***

Wardog: Honest.

METAL STORM: ***Hellas.***

Wardog: Food.

METAL STORM: ***Do you like death and black metal?***

Wardog: I'm not particular crazy about it, no. I respect this music. I like to watch them live. I think it's fun, but I don't like it a lot.

METAL STORM: ***Are you religious?***

Wardog: Yes, I am but it's a kind of private religion, not organized.

METAL STORM: What does Wardog mean to you.

Wardog: Wardog means to me a lot of hard work. A lot of HARD WORK.

METAL STORM: ***What's your opinion about the fanzines?***

Wardog: Oh I love fanzines, you know they are really cool.

METAL STORM: ***In order to finish this interview, can you send a message to our readers?***

Wardog: I'd like to come and play in Hellas and eat your food. I hope to enjoy the album and see you on tour. Stay metal, stay true.

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Lux Occulta

Lux Occulta are one of my favorite bands in the black metal genre. The reason for this is that they have achieved in using aggression, as well as melody, having very strong mixtures. Their album "Dionysos" is based on the concept of the ancient god of wine and joy. They are as well one of the most successful and promising bands from Poland. Let's follow them to the dark forests of Ancient Ceremonies.

METAL STORM: ***Your first CD "Forever alone, Immortal" can't be found in local stores. Can you describe it? Is it a full length album or a mini-CD, when was it released, it's songs?***

Lux Occulta: Well, you cannot find it in Greek metal stores, because our distributor - Black Lotus Records - was mainly interested in "Dionysos". It's a pity because I think "F.A.I." is a good album as well. It's our first full-length release, almost one hour long, containing six compositions, full of despair and dark atmosphere. "F.A.I." is perhaps slower and less brutal than "Dionysos", but I think there's more of some kind of tragic melancholy in it. If you can't find it in the store, you can order it by mail, directly from Pagan Records. The prices are pretty acceptable, I think. The address is:
PaganRecords,
P.O. Box 12, 86-105,
Swiecie 5,
Poland.

METAL STORM: ***Now that some time has passed since the release of "Dionysos", can you tell me about the reactions of the press, and the public, are you satisfied with the sales?***

Lux Occulta: Yes, we are pretty satisfied. The reactions of the press had been amazing. I have read only one review that was not positive (in a pure heavy metal fanzine from Poland...), but we've got tons of enthusiastic ones instead! The reaction of the fans has been amazing as well.We've been voted the second Polish band of 1997 (three months after releasing "Dionysos", second to the mighty Vader of course. The sales were also quite good. As for purely underground release of course, what means that we've sold about 6000 copies of "Dionysos" and it still sells... but you know, the amount of records sold is not what it's all about...

METAL STORM: ***How did you come to choose a concept relating to ancient Hellas in your work? Do you generally know about our civilization?***

Lux Occulta: I think every educated European should know something about the culture, history and beliefs of ancient Greece (Hellas) as it's the cradle of our culture and humanistic sciences, like philosophy, philology... and Western occultism. That's why I've chosen beautiful Dionysian myth as the main subject of my lyrics. And it's not just a beautiful story for me - I think that Dionysos, god of paradox, still reveals some mysteries that are very important for a human individual, even at the beginning of 21st century. Or maybe even now more than ever?

METAL STORM: ***Since not many things about the Polish scene are known in our country, can you tell about it? Is it now flourishing or in decline?***

Lux Occulta: Polish underground scene had never been better!!! Especially when it comes to extreme metal stuff... The best bands are Vader, Moon (soon new, killer album on Impact Records), Devilyn (two albums on French Listenable Records, great death metal), Prophecy, Hate, Epitome, Christ Agony, Damnable, Night Gallery, Tenebris, Sacriversum, Yattering, Behemoth, Holy Death, Heresy and tons of others. Remember these names, because they really kick ass.

METAL STORM: ***About the Freedom, Magic, Art idea. Why did you choose these three concepts to represent you and your music, are you into occult?***

Can you tell me your own definitions of Freedom and your preferences/tastes in Magic and Art?

Lux Occulta: Yes, I consider myself an occultist, what means I am interested in these aspects of the human nature, in these sciences which had already been forgotten or forbidden during the ages. Occultism is pure humanism if you ask me, without any limits and predictions... The definition of freedom? I don't know any to be honest. Freedom is something you feel by your heart, not what you think of. And you know, when you are free, you don't even realize it, because it is the natural and poor state of human soul but when freedom is gone, you learn how important it is... My preferences Magick? This is not the subject I'd like to talkabout in the interview, but let me say Aleister Crowley was one of my biggest influences. Art? When it comes to visual arts, I love all kinds of paintings, but my favorite ones are made by Goya and Malczewski. They're two different painters, living in different countries and epochs, but they have something in common, they both smelled the dark... I love good movies as well and I consider David Lynch the best film director ever. Some other great ones are S. Kubrick ("Clockwork Orange", "The Shining"), O. Stone ("Natural Born Killers"), A. Holland, P. Greenway etc. And last but not least - music... I love all kinds of music, from the classical stuff - Chopin, Beethoven, Wagner, Mozard... through metal to some pop stuff like David Bowie, US3, Simply Red, Apollo 440.

METAL STORM: ***You seem to have many (six) members in the band, how do you co-operate together? Do you all contribute to the composition of the songs?***

Lux Occulta: Not equally... Our keyboard player U. Reck and guitarist Peter compose all the stuff, but all the arrangements we do together, in the rehearsal room.

METAL STORM: ***Can you tell me which bands have influenced Lux Occulta?***

Lux Occulta: No. Ha, ha, ha... seriously speaking, there were so many of them, that I don't really remember them all. At the beginning we were strongly influenced by early recordings of such bands as Phlebotomized, Tiamat, Moonspell, Paradise Lost or even My Dying bride. We also loved Greek (Hellenic) metal scene and bands like Necromantia, Varathron and Rotting Christ. Then we moved into more black metal direction, we started to listen a lot of Burzum, Cradle of Filth, Emperor... today we are more into Nocturnus, Misanthrope, Morbid Angel, Bal-Sagoth. You can see that everything changes, our influences too... and I suppose our music changes as well.

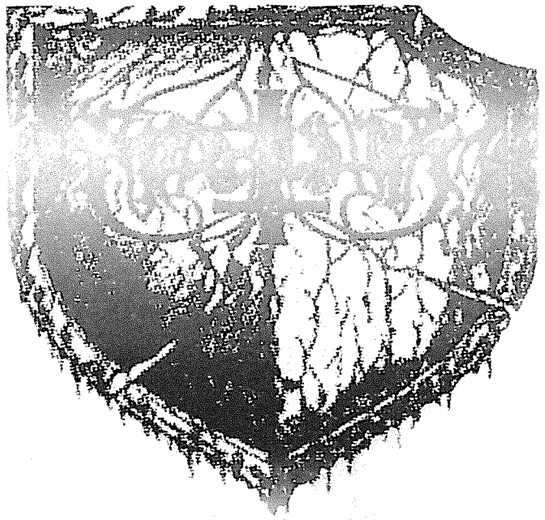
METAL STORM: ***Do you know any bands in Hellas who play in the same ancient-Hellenic concepts (such as Necromantia, Naer Mataron, Kawir, Fiendish Nymph)?***

Lux Occulta: Of course I know Necromantia, a real killer! As I've said before, they inspired us in a way at the beginning of Lux Occulta and I cannot wait for their new recordings. I think they're silent for too long already. I also know Near Mataron debut album, which is not bad, but nothing special for me, either. The other two, only know by names. But you forgot (ngd: but I am also very happy to see him adding bands to his list...) about two other great bands exploring Ancient Hellenic spirit, I mean godly Varathron (they're on Pagan records now, I think it's fantastic!) and killer Elysian Fields (greetings Bill!). I also listen to some other Greek (Hellenic) bands as well, your scene surely belongs to my favorite ones, let me just mention Rotting Christ, Deviser, Nightfall (but rather their records before "Lesbian Show"), Terra Tenebrae (cheers Vassilis) and Exhumation.

METAL STORM: Is there anything not questioned that you would like to mention, a message to the Hellenic fans?

Lux Occulta: Thank you very much for the interesting interview and your support. Cheers to all Hellenic fans of Lux Occulta, I hope to play for you some day!!! Get ready for our new album "My Guardian Anger", out in spring of 1999. Magick. Freedom. Art.

NGD



Ten years of continual and destructive presence in the black metal scene. Hated and adored. Behold the mighty Marduk. An interview given to Metal Storm 'zine by Marduk's natural front man. Legion without grief or regret answers honestly to every question no matter how tough they are.

METAL STORM: ***Is antichristianic lyric style turning into a warfare lyric style for Marduk ?***

Marduk: No the core is and will always be antichristianity. It's basically the same story as with Vlad. We used the 2nd world war as a subject, because we thought: why should black metal always deal with medieval stuff ?

METAL STORM: ***What happened to It from Opthalamia ?***

Marduk: He now lives in Stockholm with his sister. He is hiding because some people threatened to kill him. He is too afraid to go underground again and now you can understand who is spreading those rumours about It living in Finland.

METAL STORM: ***Why did you left Opthalamia back then?***

Marduk: It was always my opinion that a man should give the best of him in one job, one band in this occasion, so I left Opthalamia to join Marduk because I wasn't satisfied in Opthalamia and also because the Marduk's style of music is just what I like.

METAL STORM: ***Are rumours saying about a war between swedish and norwegian black metal groups back at the starting years of this decade true ?***

Marduk: No , in fact norwegian and swedish bands were united against false black metal, death metal and all the finnish bands under the banner of the Inner circle.

METAL STORM: ***How do you see the swedish black metal underground scene?***

Marduk: There is no such scene in Sweden anymore. They are all playing like In Flames. Those few left playing black metal most of them don't know how to play and mostly care how to pose in the forests .

METAL STORM: ***Morgan said that one book containing lyrics from previously released Marduk albums and rare photo material was going to be published. Is going to be published and if yes when?***

Marduk: I don't know, you should probably ask Morgan about it.

METAL STORM: What does a Marduk live show contain?

Marduk: I just spit fire to the air and then we try to play our music with maximum violence and maximum possible quality. This is why we never drink before any show. We are seeking to satisfy all our fans that have come to see us, because they are making us what we are. Therefor we are trying to give the best possible on stage.

METAL STORM: ***What was the situation when Joakim departed from Marduk ?***

Marduk: Morgan just said to him to go away. He was like a little kid: afraid of everything and bothered by everything.

METAL STORM: ***Lord Ahriman of Dark Funeral always claim his group to be faster and better than Marduk. What does he have against you ?***

Marduk: I don't know him very well . We have spoken on the telephone one or two times. I guess that he is pretty fucking jealous about the good work Marduk are doing through lots of work and exercise.

METAL STORM: ***Tell us about Marduk's future plans?***

Marduk: After completing all our concerts for "Panzer Division Marduk" we will return to Sweden, rest for a while and the prepare the next album.

METAL STORM: ***Speak to us for the new albums artwork.***

Marduk: It awesome. It's full of tanks, war and death. The album won't contain any lyrics because we thought that it would spoil the artwork. Of course anyone will have the opportunity to find them on the internet.

METAL STORM: ***Close the interview as you wish.***

Marduk: Thank you and eternal hails to all our fans for their support throughout all this years. See you on tour.

KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

ANGRA

I'm wondering, what I could say about the greatness of the Brazilian gods Angra. In the short time that they exist, they succeed to create three fantastic albums, to make a very good name in the scene and earn a lot of fans. We made to meet Angra and take a short interview, at the time they visit Hellas for two live shows. Kiko Loureiro has more things to say about his band, Angra.

METAL STORM: *First of all, are you satisfied with the sales of Fireworks? What about the album? Do you think that is the continue of "Holy Land"?*

Angra: Well, I don't know a lot of things about the sales. I just know that it's going very well and I think that, everything is OK We sale more albums than ever in Japan and in France, we did a very successful tour in Japan, it's going very well. About "Fireworks" now. We wanted to give a different atmosphere than "Holy Land" and I think we did it. It's not the continue of "Holy Land", it's a quite different album.

METAL STORM: *It seems to me that your making a return to your roots. Your new album "Fireworks" is more in the veins of "Angel's Cry".*

Angra: Look, we never plan what we are doing, what we are going to play. We do what we want to do. That's what happened with "Fireworks". We had ready about 20 songs, some of them in the style of "Holy Land" and some of them more classy. At this time, we decided to follow more heavy stuff than we had in "Holy Land". I have to say that we had a lot of help from our producer, Chris Tsangarides.

METAL STORM: *What about the single of "Fireworks", "Lisbon"? Why have you decide to release this song as a single?*

Angra: We had to choose one song for our single and at the time we were working for "Fireworks" the song that we had ready and we thought that is good for a single, was "Lisbon".

METAL STORM: *Last year you released four singles (I'm talking about "Make Believe") with nothing new on it. Why did you do it? There is the thought that you did it for money...*

Angra: NO, don't even think about it. The release of the singles was a decision of our label, we didn't do it. Also these singles was mentioned to be only in France, but anyway it was a thought from our label.

METAL STORM: *What is your opinion about the fanzines?*

Angra: I like them. It's the thing that keeps heavy metal alive. There is also the magazines, but fanzines more space to unknown bands and help them to their career.

METAL STORM: *There is the rumour that after the tour, Andre Matos, will leave the band and a guy called Nando Fernadez or something like that will take his place.*

Angra: Nothing is going to happen and the answer to all this is "Fireworks" and the successful tour we're doing. There is a lot of rumours about us and the truth is one. We had a little fight between us or, I could say, a big conversation about the band.

We were a little bit disappointed with our contract but we found the solution with the guys and everything now is OK

METAL STORM: *What about Michael Weikath and Max Cavalera? Both told bad things about you?*

Angra: I don't know what to say about Michael Weikath. He said that we stole the music of Helloween and that we should play football(as Brazilians) than music! The truth is that we have some influences from Helloween in "Angel's Cry" but of course we didn't stole Helloween's music. We were in some shows with Andi Deris and Roland Grapow and I have to say that the guys were very friendly with us. We might bother Weikath with our success! About Cavalera now. He said that bands like Viper and Angra destroys metal and that we took the idea of Brazilian ethnic music (see "Holy Land" from Sepultura. I'm very surprised of what he said, because we have thank a lot of times Sepultura for their contribution in Brazilian metal. Also I have to say that we used first Brazilian music in "Angel's Cry".

METAL STORM: *Why did you changed label and manager?*

Angra: Well, our ex-label was good on us, but didn't had a lot of possibilities. We wanted a label that could spread our music all over the world, to play a lot of live shows and SPV gave us that opportunity. About the manager now, we weren't satisfied with him in some things, so we decided that for the good of the band, we had to change him.

METAL STORM: *OK guys, thanks for this interview. As last words, send a message to our readers.*

Angra: Thank you for the support all this years, I hope that you liked the album and I hope that I'll see you again one day for a live show. Also good luck to Metalstorm.

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

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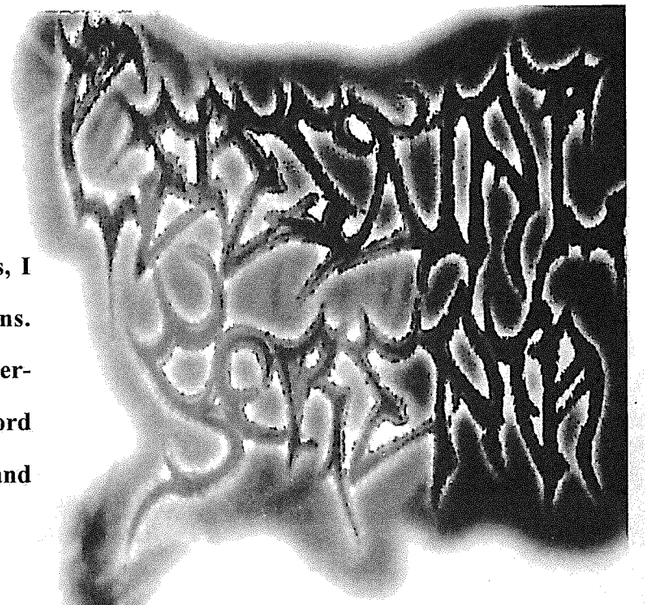


Celestial Scream is an ambitious, I can say, band from Athens. Having knowledge of the underground scene and are now in search of a record company while they still produce new ideas and tracks.

METAL STORM: ***I'd like you to give me a short biography of the band.***

Celestial Scream: We were formed up on November '97. We began as a project on April of the same year: me with members of Inthrall. We had to pause our work for the recording of Inthrall's demo. After that the situation cleared, as members had to decide in which band they'd belong. Then we searched for a singer, gave out some lives and finally recorded our demo . We are now ready to readjust our line-up, as we are changing our drummer and our bassplayer because of army and studying obligations.

METAL STORM: ***I'd secondly want you to describe me the kind of music you play, as well as your influences.***

Celestial Scream: We have already some tracks (8 to 9). Three of them (those on our demo) are atmospheric death, with some black metal elements. We have 3 purely black Norwegian tracks, which have and some other elements and passings. The rest are in the Swedish death metal genre with some black elements. We are in studio recording two songs. We don't know how they will come out. If the production is good, they will be added to the promo-CD we are preparing now. If not they will be given to compilations or given out in the future, in case a record company demands from us more tracks.

METAL STORM: ***So you hope to sign up with a company...***

Celestial Scream: Well I don't know right now, we are in search of a company. But I don't know if it will be underground or not, from inland or abroad.

METAL STORM: ***Now, please tell me some bands that have influenced you, as well as bands from the undergroung that you personally admire.***

Celestial Scream: I personally admire Black Death, Satryricon, exceedingly Diabolical Masquerade, Emperor, Septic Flesh, From the underground: Crimson Sunsets, because they have their own way, they play atmospheric death, but someone can hear also other elements in their music (70's riffs for example). Deepend nail, Jag Panzer, Souls Astray, Celestial Scream (laughs!!) Disharmony.

METAL STORM: ***How would you describe your music to someone who doesn't know anything about you?***

Celestial Scream: When we begun playing, we were often asked about our music. We didn't describe it as atmposheric death or anything. That's because in some tracks, if you alter the vocals, you see a classic h/m track. So we would describe our music as atmospheric (mainly because of the keyboards) metal, there are solo alternations, many elements. The whole setting is totally heavy.

METAL STORM: ***And with what are you concerned lyrically?***

Celestial Scream: The lyrics are about personal beliefs of our singer. Through fantastic stories who don't have anything to do with reality, but are about real situations. "Ordeal" was about some torturing during the middle ages. If someone had commited a crime back then, we was thrown inside a lake tied with chains. If he could untie the chains and escape, he would be set free. The story is about someone who untied his chains and saved himshelf. The other track is about a person who had died and is driven to Hades. He thinks about his past life and the bad deeds he had commited. He could understard that he was doing such deeds while in life, but he didn't do anything to change them. Now he wants to change them, but he is dead and so unable to do so.

METAL STORM: ***And now please talk to me about your lives.***

Celestial Scream: We've played live seven times, three in local places, and four in clubs here in Athens (two in "An" and two in "Woodstock", for those who know what's going on here).

METAL STORM: ***And a classic question of our zine: Iron Maiden reunion. Your opinion.***

Celestial Scream: I believe that the reunion has economical profit as a target. I don't believe that Iron Maiden can give out a shocking release. It will be a shocking release concerning the promotion and that now Bruce/Smith are back in the band and everyone will go out and buy it. They were losing too much with Bailey by not performing live, (American tour cancelled for example). With Bruce it's sure that they'll sell. It will be a classic Maiden album, not like those with Bailey, and nothing more, nothing new. B: for example I didn't buy the previous two, but I'll buy this one, just to see how it will be.

METAL STORM: ***I would like to ask you how you see the future of what we call underground scene, there are people who believe that the term "underground" is dead and that everything is in management and promotion now.***

Celestial Scream: This situation is both good and bad. There is of course underground as it was in the past, but in very smaller scales: there are bands who want to remain in small companies, sign in them knowing that they can't get high budgets because simply the company can't afford it. In Hellas things were better in the past because you could separate who was worth it from whom didn't. Few bands signed from the stack and someone knew that they were of quality. Now we have many companies world-wide who sign with everybody. There is a great underground situation in the United States. There are 20 big companies and other 300 with small bands. It is clear that these companies are there to help smaller bands to put out their work by strengthening them. Then when a 7" was released, it meant something, split or not. Now it's for everyone!

METAL STORM: ***And let's end with a message to the fans.***

Celestial Scream: I'd advice him/her to spend some time with small bands and for the underground. Bands become bigger and bigger by people interested in them. When I begun, I didn't give any time at all to such bands but I've followed bands from demo to becoming very known and it's a unique feeling.

NGD

CRIMINAL

For people that the only thing they know from Chile is football (notice: Marcelo Salas, rules), we have the answer : Criminal, Chiles best music expot!!! Anton Reisenegger, natureal leader of the Chilians deathsters open his hurt and says to us a lot of interesting things about him and Criminal, from the other side of the world...

METAL STORM: ***Hi, Anton. Can you tell us in short some things about your new album?***

Criminal: O.K. We were formed in 1991 with a lot of thrash influences like Violence, Forbidden and stuff like that. We did a couple of demos, we opened the live of Kreator which was our first show down here, we played in some shows in 1992, 1993, 1994 until we signed with B.M.G. a contract, we recorded our first album "Victimized", which did pretty well, we did and a couple of videos too which did very well in the Latin MTV, we played with a lot of bands like Sepultura, Slayer, Napalm Death, Kreator and in 1997 we did our second album "Dead Soul" with the producer of Kreator, we did a lot of touring down here in South America and the last year we got a contract with Metal Blade which saw interest to release our records in the rest of the world, so it's been a contract with B.M.G. and them and here we are.

METAL STORM: Did it helped you to sign with Metal Blade, the fact that you had a good name with Pentagram, in the past?

Criminal: I don't really know, if that was an influence on them to sign us, because the guys that signed us, didn't really know a lot of things about Pentagram, but I think especially in Europe, it helped us because Pentagram are very well known to the fans there and I think that Criminal, have a lot of the style of Pentagram but with a more modern sound, so yes I think it helped us.

METAL STORM: A lot of people simulates Criminal with Sepultura. Do you think that you'll reach one day, the glory of Sepultura?

Criminal: I think, it's very difficult to say it, because it's been a little hard for us, to show to the world our music and of course it's a very big thing to be compered with Sepultura but we do our own thing and we're gonna take it as far as it goes. We do anything in our power to get out of the country, to play and show to everybody, what Criminal is, but of course we have the same style with Sepultura and the same background, because we started the same time, so it's been a kind of logical to been compered with Sepultura.

METAL STORM: ***What about your latest album, "Dead Soul"?***

Criminal: Well, it's new for the rest of the world, but not for me, because it was released in 1997 by B.M.G, the negotiations with Metal Blade, went slow. I had wished tobe released earlier, like last year or something like that, but it's still fresh sounding. I'm very much into it. Working with a producer like Vincent was very good for us as musicians in order to get better and taking more seriously what you do. I like the sound of it, maybe the final mix could be better if we have been done it, in a studio in the States or in Europe cause the studios here in Chile, are not that good. Of course our album is coming out in a season that a lot of bands plays melodic metal or gothic, but I think that there are people that wanted an album like that.

METAL STORM: Your lyrics are very depressive and personal. Is that because of the dictatorship that your country, Chile, had?

Criminal: In an unconscious way that can have an influence, but your right saying that it's personal. I'm writing for things very deep inside me, the lyrics are dark, it's about the demons I have inside me, which I throw them and spit them out. I don't like to write about politics like the hard-core bands do. What I do is to look more to the inside of a person and see, how the violence effected them, how the political situation hurt them. I think that a lot of people are lonely and sad right now from the society and that's what I'm trying to put on my lyrics.

METAL STORM: What about your future plans? Maybe a tour in Europe?

Criminal: Well, it's definitely something we want to do. I know it's not easy, we are very far away and the plane tickets are very expensive but we made friends from bands like Napalm Death, Sepultura and maybe some of them will take us out. We are working with American management and with a label like Metal Blade, behind us, I think it's very possible. At this time, we are starting to write on our next record already, which probably we're gonna record it sometime in the second half of 1999 and we are very focus on that, because Chile isn't a very big country and we don't have a lot of things to do, so...

METAL STORM: ***Are you satisfied with your label?***

Criminal: Up to now, yes. It seems that they like the band very much, to everybody I talk to, they are very enthusiastic with what they do and I think that they are gonna do a good promotion.

METAL STORM: ***Why have you decide to write a song in Spanish (which is my favourite) and what does it talking about?***

Criminal: We decided to write a song in Spanish, because here in Chile, Argentina, Columbia and everywhere in South America, kept asking us why don't we do a song in Spanish and we said yes because it's our birth language and because everybody writes songs in English, so we said, why don't we do it? The tittle is in English "Songs Of Misery", but it's not like focus on the material poverty, it's more focus on the poverty of the soul, of not having ideas, goals and life, it's about the emptiness of the soul.

METAL STORM: Tell us a few things about the metal scene of your country.

Criminal: It is very strong. A lot of bands like Metallica, Testament, Slayer and many more came here, after the military government went away, and everybody is surprised about the crowd that is going in the concerts and the energy that they have. It's a very new thing for the people down here. In Europe the bands are playing there for 20 or 30 years, since there is metal and here is only few years, so it's very new for the people and people are very enthusiastic about it. Here in Chile, are a lot of bands, from melodic punk to brutal death and we have a couple of very good magazines, there is a radio station that plays a lot of rock and metal. I think that B.M.G also is a sign of what metal means to this country. Some good bands are: "Buema Arcanus" who are in the veins of My Dying Pride, Excecrator which plays thrash metal. There is also some friends of mine who plays very twisted style with funny Spanish lyrics. There is a band called Ups, which is something in the veins of No Effect, very good too. There is a lot more.

METAL STORM: Do you know anything about Hellenic metal?

Criminal: Well, I don't know a lot. I know that you have a very good scene and the only band that I know is Rotting Christ.

METAL STORM: Let's go back to your cover. What does it means to you?

Criminal: When we finished doing the record "Dead Soul" which are words that we repeat in the record often, we really didn't know how to illustrate that, to make I came one day with a book from a German photographer which had a photo that was very similar of what we did and I thing it's very interesting photo and I wish everyone will understand the meaning of our tittle in the cover. We tried to put a dead soul in a picture and that's how it came up.

METAL STORM: You have been nominated from Latin MTV for your videos. How did it helped you?

Criminal: Latin MTV was very helpful for us. When we started, when we did our first album especially. That time they had a two hour show every weekend and it was shown twice every weekend, only heavy stuff. It was the thing that united South America's metal scene, so we did some videos with very little money and that's what made us big here in South America. Then we got a little more money for this album and we did a very shocking video. I hope you will see it one day.

METAL STORM: Which are your dreams for the future?

Criminal: I don't know...touring with Slayer maybe or to play in all the big festivals in Europe, but it's something that it might come true very soon. I've already made true some of my dreams because I met Lemmy, Ozzy, some of the great old guys. I don't know what the limit is, we are gonna take it as far as we can, as I told you before.

METAL STORM: Criminal is a strange name for a band...

Criminal: When we started we wanted a name that is sounding the same in Spanish and in English. Then we wanted something aggressive, to stuck in peoples heads and to describe our music. So, we decided to name our band, Criminal. But you have to know that we are not criminals!!!

METAL STORM: Do you remember a funny story during the recordings of "Dead Soul"?

Criminal: Well, we have a song called "Guilt" which is a very slow song and when we started to record it, it went very slow, because we just had lunch and we were very tired. So, every time we were doing the overdubs, Vincent, our producer, was getting us for dinner, so we can be in the same mood!

METAL STORM: Can you tell me what happened with Pentagram?

Criminal: With Pentagram the problem was that we didn't had much work to go and it was very strange situation plus we were very young and some of us were more interesting in parties, women and drinking than the band itself and the truth is that Pentagram, got very well known, long after they were already finished, so it was pretty strange to see now people wearing Pentagram T-shirts and stuff like that. The problem when we started with Criminal was that we didn't had a lot of opportunities, we were playing in very small places, you can't imagine how shit it was, but we didn't let it down, we worked and now here we are.(all these after a question about Criminal's problems).

METAL STORM: What is your opinion about metal and religion? Do you think that a musician should guide the fans in the way he wants?

Criminal: I respect everybody's decision to follow a religion, whatever it might be, Christianity or Bhoudism, Satanism or whatever, as far as they respect my opinion. That's the big problem with catholic church, down here in Chile. They are very powerful and they use the power to force their opinion upon the government and upon the people. I'm totally against that. If you want to follow a religion, say your prayers, read the books you want to, but leave the people alone.

METAL STORM: Can you imagine Criminal after 10 years? How would you like to be?

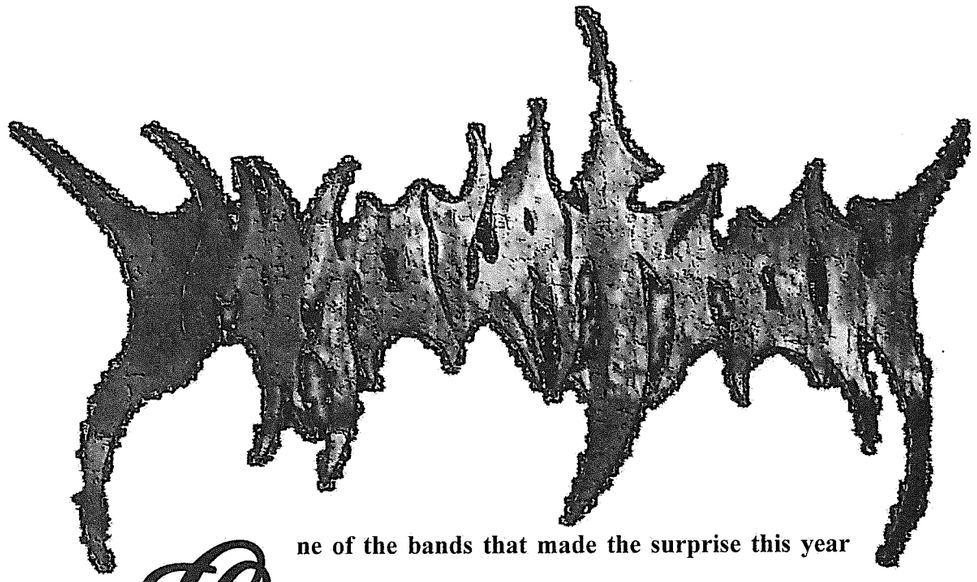
Criminal: Probably, we wont be jumping and headbanging that much. I would like to carry on with the band. Probably, the music is not gonna be the same like is not the same now, like 10 years ago. I don't now, probably I'll gonna be a lot faster.

METAL STORM: How would you describe Criminal to someone that doesn't know you?

Criminal: I would say, that we are metal. I don't like tittles like: thrash, death and stuff like that. It's very aggressive brutal metal, nothing beautiful, nothing lovely. It's the antithesis of beauty. Very ugly shit! The last words are yours... I would like to say to your readers that one of the things we like most is to come and play over there, so they can see us live. We are very strong live and when they'll see us they'll understand why people here in Chile and in South America get crazy about Criminal. Thank you, Nikos.

METAL STORM: I thank you Anton.

NIKOS TZOUANNIS



One of the bands that made the surprise this year are the Americans Imoolation which with their new album "Failures for Gods" are getting ready to get into the death metal elite. But let ross Dolan, vocals/bass, to tell you much more about Immolation...

METAL STORM: *Hi, ROSS. Which are your feelings about your new album?*

Immolation: We are very happy with it. It's probably our strongest album without a doubt. It's strongest than the last two, much darker, a better album. It's just a good album. I am very satisfied.

METAL STORM: *Your album is called "Failures For Gods". What does it mean for you?*

Immolation: Everything as we say lyrical, as you know, we stuck in the same type of lyrics we had focus in the previous album which basically focus in our feelings, opinions and believes about religion, how it effects to people and how it controls people. So "Failures To The Gods", what that means to us personally, it says that people who allow themselves to be controlled and manipulated by religion in one form or an other, are failures in the sense that they can't make sure decisions for themselves and then they become victims of something like god or religion. They guide their lives. As well these gods are the worst shit and are being admired by people. They are failures and in a sense that they don't ever deliver what they promise. If they do deliver, it's something in very shallow level. I'm not religious. Religion plays no part of my life.

METAL STORM: *Isn't it a risk to write songs about religion? You might loose a lot of fans...*

Immolation: That's O.K . It's our opinions! We don't want to influence any people, we're not out to change anybody's mind. Basically we write very dark music, our lyrics are very dark as well, and as I said
it's expressions of our personal opinions. If people don't agree with as it's OK, they don't have to agree with us. A lot of people I thing do agree with us, in a lot of different levels. They don't have to listen to it, if they don't like it. It's not a popularity contest that to win this contest you make dark music!

METAL STORM: *Which are your expectations from this album?*

Immolation: Well, we expect to do very well, I mean, since it is our strongest, I think people will see it right away, I think that the true fans of Immolation automatically they like what we doing and they'll see that we have take Immolation to the next level. So I think that our expectations are very positive.

METAL STORM: *Have you heard any comments about your new album?*

Immolation: So far the most of the people that they have the CD, they like it a lot, they think it is a very strong album, they are very impressed with it in a lot of ways, they liked the artwork, the packaging, everything! The most important is that the music is very strong and dark, which is what we wanted. People who we know and have the CD, like it a lot.

METAL STORM: *Now that you releasing your third album, "Failures To The Gods", how do you see your previous two?*

Immolation: I'm very happy with the two first albums. I think they're both very strong albums, they're representing Immolation at the time they were released. I think it's very classic death metal albums, even today, they have a lot of classy elements. We never look back and say that we're not very proud about with our first two albums because we are. Of course there are things about them that could been improved, but you know, that's how we were at that point of time, so it's fine.

METAL STORM: *How do you feel that you belonging an historical label as Metal Blade is? Is it hard to be a part of it?*

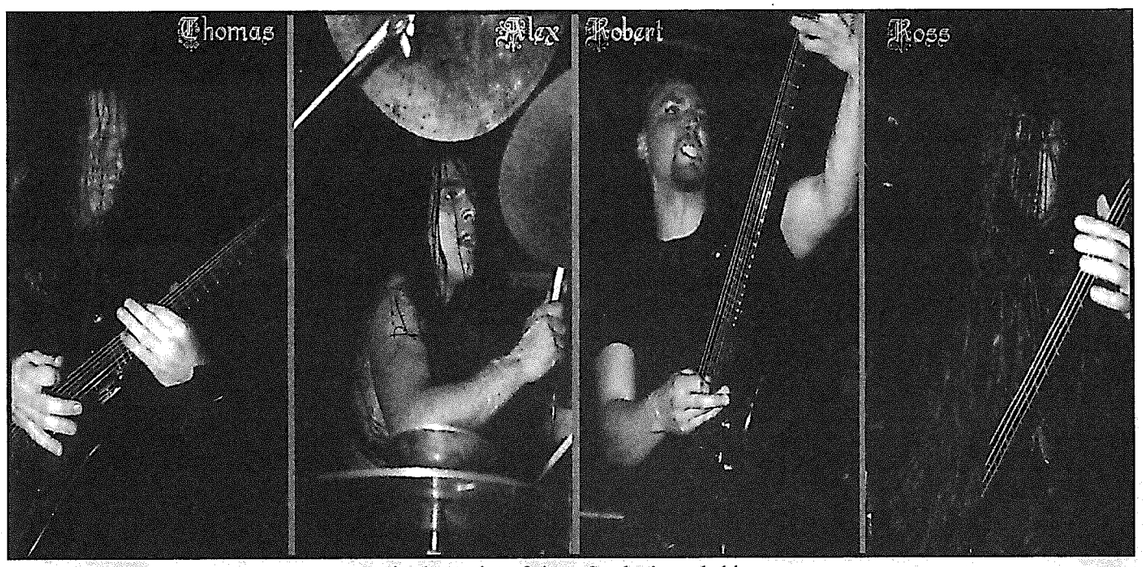
Immolation: It's fabulous, it's great. We're very happy being on Metal Blade.

It's a great metal label, everybody here is very cool and very much into work with the band, helping, promoting and guiding into the right direction, it's definitely very cool. It's not hard to be on Metal Blade, it's nice because they know what they're doing and that's what we need, we need a label that's gonna get our music out there, getting it in the stores and they know how to promote a band and that's what we like.

Immolation 10 years ago. Which are the differences with today and the problems you had?

Immolation: There weren't really so many problems, it was all very fresh and very exciting as today but I think now is more pressing cause we're releasing albums, more touring, we are trying to make things as good as possible, so we didn't have these kind of responsibilities in that point of time. So that's probably the main differences.

shows in Hellas and we should play. I mean I'd like personally to see some of Hellas, some of the ruins. I was a big reader of Hellenic Mythology, when I was in school. This kind of stuff fascinates me, as you know the ruins represents the great civilization you had and still exists. It's something that excites me and I'd like to see Hellas one day. Maybe I'll come there for vacations (notice: why not?)



METAL STORM: *Which are your futures plans?*

Immolation: Right now our plans is to release this album doing as much touring as possible, we already work on our fourth album and hopefully we'll be in the studio next year to record our fourth album. Also we are going to play in Milwaukee Metal Festival.

METAL STORM: *What about the cover? Personally I like it a lot.*

Immolation: Oh, thanks. Well, basically when you look at the cover outside, you see the figure of the devil, it definitely represents darkness and evil, and then when you open the inside cover, you see the same figure from the other idol, he has the face of Jesus Christ, so basically the message is: we're saying that religion, christianity, how ever you want to look at it is one of the most evil today's society. We are not satanists, we are just realists, we believe in reality, not in a fairytale.

METAL STORM: *Which are your influences?*

Immolation: If you want to talk about let's say our earlier inspirations, musically I would say that we are definitely inspirited by earlier Morbid Angel, earlier Kreator, Destruction, Sodom, early Death, early Necrophagia (the first album), early Sepultura and more. Things of that nature was really big inspiration for us in our early days but now I think we are inspired from everyday's life, basically from our feelings, our ideas, the hard things that we face every day , I think that it's come more inspiration for us, more than ever.

METAL STORM: *One of the bands in you're thanks list is Rotting Christ. Do you now anything else about Hellenic metal or Hellas generally?*

Immolation: I know Necromantia. You know we did some touring with Rotting Christ and they are very cool guys. Unfortunately we haven't play any

METAL STORM: *We are not used to listen death/black metal from U.S.A...*

Immolation: Definitely not. Our scene is a very strong underground scene, it's not very big but it's dedicated to our music, there are some bands that plays a lot of lives. It's definitely not easy as it is in Europe. Otherwise I thing it's getting bigger, people are seeing this music with a better way now, they are more quirious. It's never gone away, it's just became underground for a while, but I think it's coming back again.

METAL STORM: *Do you think that you are a bit old . Metalstorm: fashion in your music?*

Immolation: We stick to our roots, we pretty much got into this because we love that music, we haven't change our style, everything we've done it's just a farther stand to create a darker album, a better produced album, that I think we now release. You know I think we established an identity for ourselves. If you put any Immolation album you now right

away that it is Immolation. I don't think that it's any question about that, but I think it's something we'd always like and enjoy this type of music and it's still very exciting for us now, just like when we started and there is no reason for us to change the sound of the band because I think it's very important for bands to have identity, it's more important for us to build on it, to improve it, than to change it.

METAL STORM: ***Do you remember the saddest and the happiest moment during your career with Immolation?***

Immolation: Probably the saddest moment was the time between the first and the second album. That five year period was very dark and depressive for us. And probably the happiest moment was when we signed ith Metal Blade, we got the second album out, we made a big comeback, that was our happiest album!

METAL STORM: ***Why, you chose Immolation as a name for your band?***

Immolation: Our first drummer, Neil, came with that name. It's something that we felt 'it feeds with the style of music we play, it's a very powerful name! Immolation means a sacrifice and represents obviously our feelings about a lot of things. Also represents the too many sacrifices we made the last 13 years for the music, so it means a lot of things to us.

METAL STORM: ***Which was the most recent book you read ?***

Immolation: The most recent book I read was one called "The Bible Code", which talks about hidden messages in the Bible, it's pretty interesting. Sometime ago I read a seriously book called "Beyond The Roadless Travel". It talks about psychoanalysis and how people think and act between each other. It's interesting stuff, I enjoy it.

METAL STORM: ***What about records?***

Immolation: I am a big fan of music generally so like all types of records. The newer stuff I listened to was the new Mercyful Fate, the new Immortal album, the new Six Feet Under, was really cool. I listen to Portishead, I like Type O Negative, Loreena McKennit, all types of stuff.

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that Heavy Metal needs a "refresh"?***

Immolation: Yes, without a doubt. I mean it's important for any type of the scene, it's getting tired for the listener after a while, because there is no new ideas, bands don't have their own identity, that's what happens in a lot of types of music.

METAL STORM: ***Do you have a favorite song from this album and why?***

Immolation: I can't say one, I like them all, but if I had to peak one, I would say probably, "No Jesus, No Beast", the second song. I think it's probably the darkest song we have written in a lot of ways. Musically and lyrical it has a lot of heavy elements to it, it has a lot of different moods, feelings and the song itself has very cool dynamic to it the way it begins, the different parts, the whole song is very dark. I like it.

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that a band needs a leader to go on?***

Immolation: No, not at all. None of us is a leader, there are no leaders in our band, we all are equally to each other, we are all very smart and intelligent people, we know what we have to do, to bring the band to the next level, so...

METAL STORM: ***Can you tell me some things about Immolation's past?***

Immolation: Well, the band started after the split of Rigor Mortis(?). Rigor Mortis broke up and Immolation formed in early 1988. Rigor Mortis, existed from 1986 to 1988. We released two demos, in 1988 and in 1989. We made a sign with Roadrunner Records and released our first album. We did two tours for that album. One in Europe and one in the States. Then we separated with Roadrunner Recd. And signed with Metal Blade which released our second album in 1996 and we did five tours, all over the world: two in Europe, three in the States, Canada, some shows in Mexico and then here we are with our third album "Failures For Gods".

METAL STORM: ***If you had the opportunity to speak with someone that you admire, who would you like to be?***

Immolation: I admire the people around me, my family, my mother who guided me in the right direction, my close friends, the guys from the band, these people have help me become a better person in a lot of ways. I just don't have the desire to talk to anybody!

METAL STORM: ***What does music in general means to you and especially, Heavy Metal?***

Immolation: Music in general represents my life. It's the way of my life, it always have been, since I was 12 or 13 years old. It's pretty much had a big impact in my entire life. I am a music freak! I love music, I love going to shows, obviously I love playing on the band, I've seen a lot of different countries, different people and pretty much based my entire life around my love for music. So that's what it means to me. There is a war in Serbia. Make a comment for it. I think it's very sad at the early '90' to be a war. As a race we come so far, but yet we haven't come so far, we still have wars and bullshit. People are so stupid in a lot of ways. We made so many inventions as a race, in technology, but we still making silly things. Politics and religion are the two most evil things in the world today.

METAL STORM: ***What is your most crazy dream?***

Immolation: To leave off the band!!?! It's a pretty crazy ...but it's nice as a dream...(a lot of laughs)

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that I've forgot to ask you something about Immolation?***

Immolation: No , I think it was very good. I just want to say as last words, that I would like to come and play in Hellas, one day, I want to thank all the Hellenic people for the support during all these years. We know that Greece has a very good metal scene and I hope soon we'll play there. In the mean time you have to listen to the album.

METAL STORM: ***Thank you Ross, it was a very interesting interview.***

Immolation: Thanx Nikos, I enjoyed it, too.

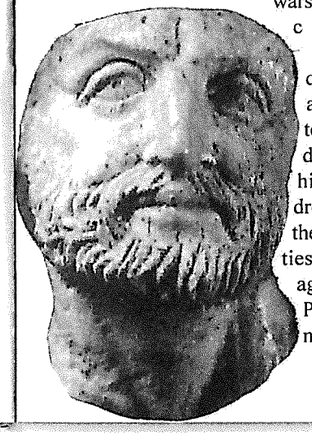
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

History is an important part of our lives. Thanks to history, we know the progress that the human race has done, since our creation. Through history we can see the mistakes that humans made and through them, we try to get better. Of course history is a subject that couldn't leave heavy metal untouched. Through all these years that heavy metal is with us, many bands wrote songs about mythical stories, wars and heroic feats that great men have done. From now and on, our magazine in each issue will analyze some of the songs that wrote history in heavy metal and talk about history. In this issue, we are starting with one of the best songs of Iron Maiden, and one of the best in heavy metal, generally. I'm talking about "Alexander The Great" from the fantastic album, "Somewhere in Time". As you will see later in the text, Iron Maiden don't follow the correct order of history facts (like the order of the battles and the death of Darius), what I did was to analyze the lyrics as mentioned in the album leaving the history "gaps" without correcting them.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

(356-323 B.C)

"My son ask for thyself another Kingdom, for that which I leave is too small for thee"(King Philip of Macedonia-339 B.C)



King Philip II, was born in 382 B.C. A part of history scholars have as a theory that King Philip II, is the greatest king ever in the ancient Macedonian kingdom, greater even from Alexander. He succeeded in taking a small land and changing it to a great Hellenic force. After a lot of wars Philip conquered almost all the Hellenic territory but he didn't succeed his greatest dream,to unite all the Hellenic counties, to a war against the Persians. He was murdered by his enemies and he didn't made his dream true. But some years later his son made Macedonia the greatest kingdom of the world and Philip proud somewhere in Elysian Fields.

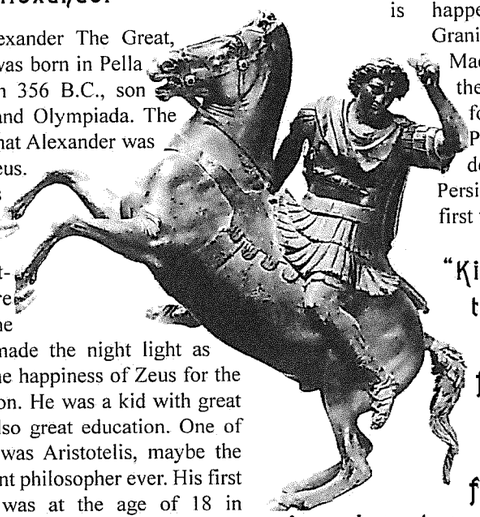
"Near to the east, in a part of ancient Greece, in an ancient land called Macedonia..."

Like all the Hellenic lands, the history of Macedonia starts with a myth. The myth says that the first Macedonians came from the south of Hellas, the city of Argos of Pelloponisos. There were three princess: Aeropos, Gavanis and Perdikkas, descendants of Timenos. They started from Argos, then they went to Illyria and finally to western Macedonia when they founded their kingdom. Macedonians is a Hellenic name and means tall. The Macedonians were tall. Also the Macedonians were taking part to the Olympic Games, where only Hellenic nations could participate (note: a lot of years later, the Romans participated to the Olympic games after an exception. They had conquered Hellas. But we have to thing also that their roots are Hellenic). I don't have to say more for someone to understand that Macedonia was, is and shall be for ever Hellenic. The history proves it. The funny thing is that some barbarians in the north borders of Hellas, the bastards Scopjians, want to steal the holy name of Macedonia but they don't have a chance cause MACE-

DONIA IS HELLENIC.

"...was born a son to Philip of Macedon, the legend his name was Alexander"

Alexander The Great, was born in Pella in 356 B.C., son of Philip II and Olympiada. The legend says that Alexander was the son of Zeus. It also says that the night he was born, lightnings where all around the palace and made the night light as day. It was the happiness of Zeus for the born of his son. He was a kid with great power and also great education. One of his teachers was Aristotelis, maybe the most important philosopher ever. His first great battle was at the age of 18 in Heronia, where he distinguished himself.



"At the age of nineteen, he became the Macedon king and he swore to free all, from Asia Minor"

Actually, Alexander became king, at the age of twenty, after the murder of his father in 336 B.C. He faced a lot of problems, when the conquered cities made a revolution against Macedonian Kingdom but Alexander with his great skills and forces that Philip left to him, won and this "battle". In the autumn of the same year, Alexander bring together in Korinthos delegates from all the Hellenic cities to discuss about a unite attack against the Persians. In that way the dream of his father was going to be true and a revenge for the previous attack of Persians against Hellas, some years ago.

"By the Aegian Sea, in 334 B.C. he utterly beat the armies of Persia"

Alexander's army, 40.000 soldiers, crossed Aegian Sea and stopped to Troia(Troy). At the end of spring (May) of 334 B.C. Alexander's first battle with the Persians is happening at the Granicus river where Macedonians, with the half of the forces that Persians had, defeated the Persian forces for the first time.

"King Darius the Third defeated fled Persia the Scythians feel by the river Jaxartes, then Egypt fell to the Macedon King as well and he founded the city called Alexandria"

At the battle of Issos, the most important battle for the conquer of Persia, King Darius with much more forces than Alexander, loses the battle and allowing him to capture his family (who were treated very good) After a lot's of conquers without a battle, Alexander on his way to Egypt takes over Gaza and then becomes master of Egypt. At Egypt in 331 B.C he founds Alexandria. The Egyptians named him son of Ammon Ra and made him a god. He went to Jaxartes river two years later, in 329 B.C, when easily won the battle with the Scythians and married Roxane princess of Bactra and daughter of King Oxyartes. In this way he wanted to show the marriage of Hellenic and Asian culture. He also killed the murderer of King Darius, Vissos.

"By the Tigris river he met King Darius again and crushed him again in the battle of Arbella. Entering Babylon and Susa treasures he found, took Persepolis the capital of Persia"

After Egypt, Alexander goes through Syria to Gaugamela where he crushes the second Persian army and parades through all the capitals of the Persian empire. Now Babylon, Sousa and Persepolis are Hellenic cities. After this crush, Darius goes to Damghan where he finds death from Vissos.

"Alexander The Great, his name struck fear into hearts of men. Alexander The Great, became a god (legend) amongst mortal men."

The soldiers of Alexander had a great respect for their leader, who was sharing everything with them and that's the reason his soldiers loved him. He was a man with a great courage and mind. Imagine that when Alexander died, the mother of King Darius loving him so much that she died three days later from sadness for the lost of this great man. A lot of nations made Alexander their god. They were adore him as a god on earth. They called him son of Zeus and Ammon Ra.

"A Phrygian King had bound a chariot yoke and Alexander cut the "Gordian Knot". And legend said that who untied the knot, he would become the master of Asia"

When Alexander went to Saggarius river, at the Gordian, there were a legend about a knot. The man who would untied the knot he would become the master of Asia. A lot of people tried, but none of them succeed to untied the knot. The soldiers of Alexander encouraged him to untie the knot and prove who is the master of Asia. Alexander went there, took a look at the knot, took out his sword and cut the knot. He was the first man that untied the knot. It was meaning that he would be master of Asia with battles...

"Hellenism he spread far and wide, the Macedonian learned mind their culture was a western way of life, he paved the way for Christianity"

It's about 70 the cities with the name Alexandria that Alexander founded. He also made scientific centers, common currency in his empire, a lot of new cities and cultural places, temples and many more. He made Asia Hellenic and created a civilization with one culture, mainly Hellenic. A new era in history is rising. The Hellenistic era, that will last for hundreds of years.

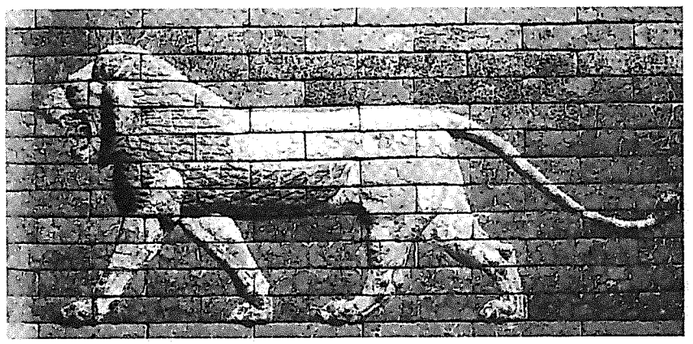
"Marching on, marching On. The battle weary marching side by side, Alexander's army line by line. They wouldn't follow him to India, tired of the combat, pain and the glory"

After the success against Persia , Alexander decides to go to India. At the Indus river he wins King Porus and his 200 elephants. He tries to enter the inside of India, but his army mutinies and the Macedonian leader goes back. The battles are now over. He goes to Pattala where he founds a great harbor and then with ships to Susa in 324 B.C where he's getting married with Statira, the daughter of Darius the third.

"Alexander The Great, his name struck fear into hearts of men, Alexander The Great, He died of fever in Babylon"

Alexander goes to his capital, Babylon, in the spring of 323 B.C. where his planning an attack to the west Mediterranean. But fever doesn't let him. He dies from a very rare Asian fever. Alexander was tired of the battles and didn't have the strength to fight it. Some other historians say that his enemies poisoned him. That's the way that the life of Alexander The Great, King of the World, ended. But his spirit is still with us, making us proud that we are Greek-Hellenes.
HAIL TO ALEXANDER, HAIL TO HELLAS.

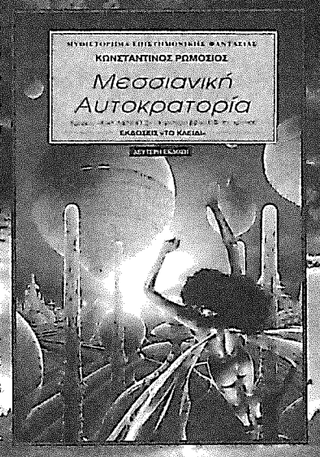
NIKOS TZOUANNIS



FREE YOUR MIND

Although these two books aren't available in an English version (or generally in any other language except Hellenic). I chose to write about them in order to make our readers from abroad to get a picture of the status-quo of the fiction literature here in Hellas.

On the first book, the story begins in the not-so distant future. The messiah of the monotheistic religions has come over with the so-called apocalypse. Now earth is on his feet except some "satanic" people who resist and are under attack and lobotomy. Archaeology, history and many other forms of science and art have been banned as a tool of Satan (a kind of Inquisition). This new empire has expanded to far-away planets. Suddenly in one of them (Canopus) a worker discovers something that causes horror to everyone on earth. The only one who can dissolve this mystery is the one remaining archaeologist, worshiper of Odin who would otherwise be lobotomised, but now is transferred to Canopus under strict observance of the state. There he will find that the reason of the panic is a temple of the Hellenic goddess Athena who had no reason of existing so far away from earth. After this chances will be given to him in order to escape into a satellite of this planet where he meets the ancient gods who tell him that by his aid they will be able to return on earth in order to make the planet free of it's regime and the self proclaimed messiah. He, by his own will decides to help them.



The second book, "The fire walks with me", is about this return. A strange fog covered Balkans and eastern Europe. Telecommunications can't get through it and everyone who has entered it hasn't returned. People who participate in this story are the president of the messiah's state, who comes into conflict with the religious true government (Rabins). Just before his death by the head-rabin he learns that in all his life, he way a toy-puppet of them acting by wrong impressions, as they wanted him to be. The other thing that he learns is that everything happening in his life was predicted from the past, decades before. The other one is a soldier in a suicide mission: equipped with a nuclear bomb, which can be energised only by him, he enters the fog in order to destroy everything. There he will see for the first time in his life people being really happy dancing around him and making love with each other. After that for the first time in his life, he will fall in love with a nymph and after some adventures and a talk with the god Hermes (the one of communication) he decides not to use his bomb, but to aid them. The story ends in a desert somewhere in America where scientists examining parts of the fog see it exploding. A nuclear-like fire embraced the while place. Every camera pointing to that place depicts the whole earth being on fire (and thus reborn), while god Apollo guides the flames. Fire walks with him. The essence and the deeper meanings hidden under the story and the conflicts of these books is the contradiction of the two ways of thinking/living, that have influenced the human history. From the one hand we have the ancient-pagan one based in truth, honour and freedom. People make art (statues, music poems) and love each other in any way they want. They live free and communicate freely with the gods. Here main representatives are Hellins as well as Vikings (the Swedish archaeologist in the first book). From the other hand we have the monotheistic point. Priesthood dressed only in black dominates the world. Every form of knowledge-science not used in economy becomes banned as a tool of "Satan". Every person is just part of the state machine with no rights, just working under the sceptre of the "messiah" (in the second book after the first messiah dies, he is replaced by a bio-mechanism just in order to keep the state going on). Of course these two sides can't but to come in conflict.

On this two books (as well as in hard reality) the second side seems more powerful and ready to crush the last remnants of the first. They control the army, the capital, etc. but once the outbreak comes and the situation inverts.

This article is dedicated to my "patron" gods: Apollo, Athena, Zeus.

Your time will come.

NGD

DISCOUNT

AUTUMNBLAZE

"AUTUMNBLAZE"

I'm not sure about the title of the album, that's because there wasn't any other title available elsewhere in the CD. About the female ones. When they decide to speed up we reach black metal forms with analogous changes in vocals, guitars and everything. Mostly songs about fairies and dreamscapes, to which they really take you away there. Sometimes they start to sing in German (see the Lunar Aurora review), adding something to the atmosphere. My best songs out of there: "those evenings we yearned", "dreaming moonspark fairylands" and "the emerald widower".

16/20

NGD

ABORYM

"KALI YUGA BIZARRE"

Aborym are a band from Italy wanting to express themselves into playing extreme music. I would say that "Kali Yuga..." is a piece of black metal, strongly influenced with keyboards and other techstuff which comes many times to play a leading role to their sound. I'd separate the record into three parts to see what's happening. In the first one, where someone can also hear "Roma Divina Urbs", the best track of the record according to me, we have traditional extreme metal, overloaded by keyboards, sometime over the limit. In the second part of the record we have two useless tracks, the former is a dance one, uninteresting, while the later is about people praying, while sometime someone pieces them off in Italian (!). Then we have three tracks with loud guitars etc., accompanied by keyboards on the background. I can say that I enjoyed "Kali Yuga...", especially some parts of it, while part of the record was uninteresting or useless, something that also must be said is that the good/interesting/well performed parts of the album are more than the bad/useless/same-stuff ones, making it an interesting buy...

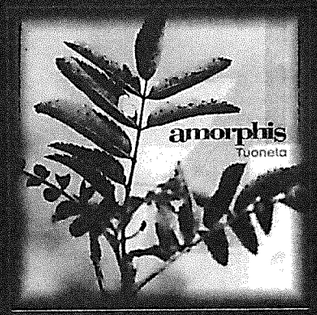
16/20

NGD

AMORPHIS

"TUONELA"

With albums like ""Tuonela", it seems that Finland is going to be my favourite country. First Stratovarius, then Children Of Bodom, Nightwish and now the magical album of Amorphis. "Tuonela" is simply the best, most mature and beautiful album of Amorphis ever. They have "forgot" the brutal vocals and now clear vocals are leading, a thing that gives to them bonus to their whole image. Songs like "The Way", "Morning Star"and "Divinity"are not composed everyday. I think that it's the big opportunity for Amorphis to taste success, something that they deserve. Listen it and follow Amorphis to their magical world. Finally, metal is a beautiful music.



19/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

ANDRE ANDERSEN

"CHANGING SKIN"

I suppose that 1999 is the year of solo albums. After D.C Cooper, singer of Royal Hunt, their keyboard player and leader Andre Andersen releases his first solo album, under the tittle "Changing Skin". I don't think that Andre had to release a solo album, because almost all the albums of Royal Hunt are composed from him and in "Changing Skin" there is no difference from albums like "Paradoxor "Moving Target". Anyway, Andre this time continues to play in the AOR/progressive style that made him famous. The role of the singer has Kenny Lubcke, which is very good but not as D.C Cooper is. Songs like "Burning Bridges" and "Wings Of Tomorrow" only Andersen could compose and it's songs that could be in the next album of Royal Hunt! It's recommended for the fans of Royal Hunt, as for the others you better look out for "Moving Target".

16.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

EDDY ANTONINI

"WHEN WATER BECAME ICE"

A lot of you may know the Italians symphonic/power metallers Skylark, a band that made the difference in the world's underground scene with their magnificent album "Dragon's Secrets". For the people who doesn't know anything about them, you better look for "Dragon's Secrets" . Anyway, here we have the solo album of their leader(he plays keyboards) and main composer of the band, Eddy Antonini and the only thing that I could say is that it is great! For the guys that doesn't know Skylark I'm sure that you're gonna like it, as for the guys that already know Skylark, you're gonna get crazy. Among the guests musicians that plays on this album are Fabio Dozzo(vocals-Skylark),Folko Orlandini(vocals- —— and Olaf Thorsen (guitar-Labyrinth).Best moment of "When water became ice" is the 15 minute song" The crypt of Montmartre" a real hymn! Personally I'm charmed from this album. Take it without a doubt.

18.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

APOLLYON

"DIABOLI GRATIA"

Something that I hope we all like in our music is experimentation and reaching

new ways. This is what Apollyon try to do in their MCD. First of all in the lyrics they chose to use Byron's poems. Then they have good alternation between extreme and aggressive parts to dark ones. In the third track of the CD, "Darkness" you can hear someone intoning Byron. But this is where we come to the defects of the MCD. If you subtract the track with the intoning, the intro./outro, it leaves you with just two songs ("When coldness wraps this suffering clay", one of the best tracks I've heard during the procession of this issue and "Memento mori"). Someone may say: "it's just a MCD, what do you expect?" but I don't know if many of us would buy a two-tracked CD no matter what of good music would be there. This is what the album left on me, as well as that the band has many ideas and potential, which can create a good release in the future.

11/20

NGD

contact: Apollyon. c/o M. Bisgaard, Ellevang 13, 7100 Vejie, Denmark or Full Moon Productions, 2039 Roxburg Court, Lakeland, Florida 33813. and www.fmp666.com

ARCH ENEMY

"BURNING BRIDGES"

One of the bands that I never gave the attention that deserves are Arch Enemy. I liked their two previous albums(especially "Stigmata") but they didn't make The record, to charm me as a fan. But I couldn't even imagine what is happening now with "Burning Bridges", one of the best albums for '99(who's the best anyway?).Arch Enemy are playing heavy/progressive/thrash metal with some death elements and brutal vocals. The third album of the swedish metalers is their final step beyond success. Of course I mean commercial success, because musically, Arch Enemy must be proud for "Burning Bridges". I can't pick out a song from "Burning Bridges", cause all of them are great. It's something that you must listen.

19/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

ASTRAL AURAMA

(PROMO TAPE)

One of the countries with tradition on death metal is Hellas. Bands like Septic Flesh succeed to get well known all over the world and make Hellas proud . A band that could continue this tradition are Astral Aurama. This promo tape includes two songs with influences mainly from Septic Flesh and old Tiamat. This band has the possibilities to do something great in the future. The only bad thing in this promo is the sound, something that doesn't help the songs. Anyway, I'm waiting impatient for their forthcoming demo.

16/20

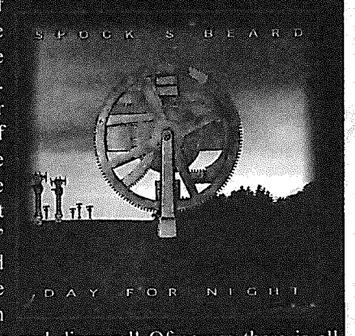
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Contact: c/o Kimon Tsomidis, Afxendiou Palikaridi 38, 18 756, Keratsini Piraeus,Hellas

SPOCK'S BEARD

"DAY FOR NIGHT"

I remember the day when I listened for the first time the fantastic album of Spock's Beard "The Kindness Of Strangers". It was the moment I realised that this band is one of the best in the progressive scene. Anyway, after the release of their first live album" The beard is out there-live" Spock's Beard are here once again with an



album, that is a real diamond! Of course there is all around the spirit of Yes and Genesis but always with the personal sound that Spock's Beard have. Keyboards more than ever exists on this album giving their personal stigma in the listening of the album. Songs like the ten-minute "Crack The Big Sky" and "Gypsy" are starting a new music attack in progressive scene. I'm sure that "Day For Night" shall satisfy all the progressive fans and not only them. It is an album that time will show the real value it has.

19.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

SOULS ASTRAY

"...IN THE EVERMORE WANDER"

Another good band! The Greeks Soul Astray send me this demo-tape and I full of surprise heard "...in the evermore wander". I'm saying full of surprise because this demo really kicks some asses. They are near to the sound of swedish death metal, with influences from In Flames and Iron Maiden(what else?).I have to say that they earned me with the power and hate this demo has.Especially, Lethal Millennium, my favourite, kills. It's something that the fans of eerie death metal will love. At this time Soul Astray are looking for a contract, something that I'm sure they'll find. You can take it with 1000 dr./5$.

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Contact:Christos Kontogiorgas, Tinou 5, T.K 15127, Melissia, Athens, Hellas.

BLACK FUNERAL

"MOON OF CHARACITH"

Black Funeral (according to their biography) had released two albums in black metal, and now decided to experiment themselves into other musical ways. "Moon of Characith" can be characterised more in the ambient/dark scene, something out of my hearings and likings. Comparing with the (very) few elements I've heard from this scene, "Moon of Characith" is far more darker and imposing, because of the shiver music, as well as the samples/vocals spread in it.

Unfortunately, as I've said before this release is out of the interests of the zine, I don't believe metalheads will be interested in that and that's why the low grade...

09/20

NGD

contact : Black Funeral. C/o Necromantic Productions, 3058 Dunster St., Indianapolis, IN 46227,or nachttoter@hotmail.com

CROMLECH

"THE FALL OF CHRISTIANITY"

Storming from Athens Cromlech are here to remind us that true black metal lives after so many years and is still capable of producing bands that do have what it takes to succeed. The inferior blood of Burzum and Dark Throne runs through their veins and gives us three songs of old Norwegian black metal with an excellent use of keyboards, speed that could deafen every fan of romantic and atmospheric metal. They are young and careless and unfortunately, along with the fact that the Hellenic studios don't care about their groups, the sound isn't good. I think though that they do care about everything concerning their music and the second demo or hopefully their first CD will be great and for sure with a more personal sound .

15/20

KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

Contact : Cromlech , Samou 26, Xaidari 12461, Athens , Greece.

CRIMINAL

"DEAD SOUL"

Let's test your knowledges. What do you know about Chile? Football? No, that's not enough. Pinochet(fuck you).No, that's discusting. Santiago? Come on, every body knows it. O.K, you lost the game. Criminal is the key answer. The best export of Chile. This band has been created from the ashes of Pentagram and "Dead Soul" is the new album of Chilians deathsters. But, it's not so new as someone expected to be. It's been released two years ago and some problems (read the interview)allowed to the band to release it just now in the rest of the world. I could say that Criminal, are the Chilians Sepultura. Anger and hate the feelings that rules over the album. Anton Reisenegger, leader of the band, with vocals full of hate shows what death metal is. Riffs ready to take the heads of the foreigners(rave, pop, e.t.c) and guide you to a never-ending headbanging. Not for sissies!!!

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

contact :Criminal, P.O.Box 16935, Santiago 9, Chile

METAL CHURCH

"MASTERPEACE"

If this album is a masterpeace(iece) than I'm god. It might is a bad joke or else it can't be an album of Metal Church. Forget anything you knew about the gods of power/speed. Metal Church have to do with their glorious past and "Masterpeace" is surely the worst of their career. I'm wondering why this reunion happened. Money is not everything, especially when you are a band like Metal Church. "Masterpeace" is metal but not in the standards of Metal Church. Some songs like "Falldown" or "Faster than Life" doesn't save the album. I hope that they'll remember their past and they will respect their fans that supported them all these years. May Metal Church live forever (but not in this way).

12/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

HYPOCRISY

"HYPOCRISY"

After the dynamic live album "Hypocrisy Destroys Wacken", Hypocrisy made their promise true and released their sixth full length album(they have and two Ep's) This album has everything that a deathmetaler needs: power, hate, anger, good songs. This album is the answer of Hypocrisy to all the "Death" metalers. Sometimes darkness, speed or anger creates the atmosphere that a death metal album must have and Hypocrisy is doing it reality. Listen to "Froctured Millenium" or "Reversed Reflections" and you'll understand why Hypocrisy are one of the best death metal bands. The only bad thing is the hardcoresongs that this album have. I never liked hardcore and I don't think that Hypocrisy's style, fits to hardcore. Anyway with two words, it is a good album.

17.5/20

Nikos Tzouannis

ANGEL DUST

"BLEED"

It was a year ago when full of surprise I was listening "Border Of Reality", the first album of Angel Dust after 10 years when "To Dust We Will Decay" was released. Unfortunately or fortunately, Angel Dust wasn't the same band I was admired in the past. Anyway, the band is playing as good as they used to play in the past and after the successful "Border Of Reality" ,the fourth album of the Germans is a fact. In the world of melodic power metal belongs "Bleed", an album that from the first

track "Bleed" till the beautiful ballad "Liquid Angel", Angel Dust presents to us the most mature album shows that Angel Dust more mature than ever presents to us one of the best albums in 1999. Even now, in more melodic sound, Angel Dust once more are writing a page in the golden book of heavy metal.

18.5/20

Nikos Tzouannis

CREMATORY

"ACT SEVEN"

Unfortunately I have heard too few from their previous releases, so I can't compare "Act Seven" with these. The only thing I can conclude to from the few tracks that I've heard is that now they seem to be more heavy-metal oriented. "Act Seven" was something new to me, somehow shocking my ears. The band really achieved in creating atmosphere full of feelings and thoughts. After hearing some songs, many times I stopped to think about them and remember related experiences of mine. Material they used for this accomplishment: correct use of keyboards along with the rest of the instruments as well as good backing vocals (both male and female). The lyrics are in English in general, except sometimes when they sing in German (their mother tongue), something that the "rest" of us can't understand. Songs that I would chose out from the album: "Moonlight", "Fly" and "Waiting", each one for different reasons.

17/20

NGD

DEATHWITCH

"MONUMENTAL MUTILATIONS"

I never liked so much Sacramentum and the same is happening with the fourth album of Deathwitch, project(?) of Nickle Terror(Sacramentum).This band is playing death/black metal with a lot of influences from Venom, Sacramentum(of course) and '80's thrash metal. The album is good but not something special for metal. It's like I'm listening to the bands I said before. It also has two cover versions of "The Rite of Darkness" (Bathory) and "Necromancer" (Sepultura). Also, there are two re-recorded songs of Deathwitch, "Flag of Black Death" from their first album "Triumphant Devastation" and "Jehova Shall Bleed" from their second album "Dawn of Armageddon". Generally, it is a good album with nothing new to offer. The choise is yours.

13/20

Nikos Tzouannis

DESCEND

"BEYOND THY REALMS OF THROES"

Descend is the name of the band that was created from the ashes of Epidemic, a band who sounded according to my poor opinion like a poor mixture of early Kreator and Sepultura. The band decided

to change their name as they evolved musically and "Beyond thy realm of throes" is a very interesting album. It can be roughly described as melodic thrash/death. The songs are generally up tempo and mid tempo thrashing melodies with some death outbursts that really shake you up. The band can remind you or Kreator or early Paradise Lost at some points, but in a more violent approach. There is a dark atmosphere which creeps the album that can really haunt the listener and carry him away. The vocals are typical and remind of early Kreator (again!) and the songs, well-performed and well-crafted, don't bore the listener even if he isn't well into thrash/death style. The good element on this band is that they have really absorbed their influences so good, that they manage not to bring you on mind a specific band. The disadvantage to "Beyond..." is that the production is a little bit weak and "hollow". In other words there is not the volume and the depth required for an album like this, but that's a usual problem of the Hellenic scene. Anyway, Descend's first attempt is a good and easy listenable album, either you are into thrash/death or not, with "Damp forgotten", "Son of the loss" and "In time wrap" as best moments.

17/20

PAULOS PANANOUDAKIS

DEW SCENTED

"ILL-NATURED"

This is the fourth album of the Germans Dew Scented,a band which are playing a mixture of thrash and death metal. From the first listening of the album, someone understands that the band has worked a lot of ours in the studio to present us "ILL-Natured" The album is very good and reminds the atmosphere that bands had in the middle of '80 's. The thing, I didn't like at all is their ugly cover. I can't understand why the put something so stupid in their cover. Anyway, Dew Scented, are a good band and "Ill-natured" is an album that the fans of thrash/death metal will like. Plus a good coverversion of "Apocalypse Inside" from Sacrifice.

16/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

DIMMU BORGIR

"SPIRITUAL BLACK DIMENSIONS"

Unfortunately I am not a fun of Dimmu Borgir and their style. This doesn't happen because of their big selling rates or anything personal but I prefer black metal based on speed playing, and with keyboards helping to create some feelings not being based mostly on keyboards or pianos or anything. On the other hand I have to admit that they have created a sub-scene, having numerous followers many of those are foolish imitators (please no more!!). About "Spiritual black...", I'd consider it as a step beyond "Enthrone...", their previous release (not mentioning "Godless savage garden"). This means that the band plays better in the same style as before . So those who liked "Enthrone..." should go out and buy it, while those who didn't shouldn't mess with "Spiritual..." at all. I hope the best for what they're doing, but it's not my kind.

NGD

ODES OF ECSTASY

"EMBOSSED DREAM IN FOUR ACTS"

Odes of Ecstacy aren't another death metal band with female vocals. The only thing that I can say for sure is that they are the ticket for the people who wants to travel in the world of ecstasy. Something that they succeed with six songs, real dreams, from their debut album "Embossed Dream In Four Acts". From the magical prologues "Autumn's Grief"(a cover of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata") to "The Total Absence Of Light" or the dreaming "Faithless" the new hope of the scene gave to us a unique album that from now and on shall have a place in my (metal) heart. The war between beautiness(vocals Christina Maniati) and uglyness (brutal vocals,Dimitris Bicos) haven't found a winner The only winner is heavy metal, that have got another brilliant band. With two words someone could describe "Embossed..." and the Greeks deathsters found the right name. 0des Of Ecstasy. And you must be sure that Hellas once again is proud with albums like "Embossed..." cause slowly but with sure steps is going to the top of world's death-black metal scene.

19/20

Nikos Tzouannis

DISMAL EUPHONY

"ALL LITTLE DEVILS"

Dismal Euphony are a band which plays metal with the use of female as well as brutal vocals on a 50-50 basis, as well as keyboards. There would be nothing wrong with that, except that the whole concept is too weak. After listening the first track or something, the record becomes totally predictable, without any outbreaks or something which could surprise or even attract attention. You know the band performs sympathetically, and the female vocals are good, but just that. I can't say that I didn't like "All Little Devils", but I can't say that I liked it either.

10/20

NGD

IN EXTREMO

"WECKT DIE TOTEN!"

Have you ever heard a band that plays medieval folk metal with ancient German, ancient Norwegian and Latin lyrics?!?! Well, I didn't 'till the c.d. of In Extremo become mine. This band can surprise anyone. They succeed to mixture folk with heavy metal under a very strange sound that as I realised only In Extremo can do. These crazy Germans created the most weird album I ever heard. Why crazy? Imagine that they make the traditional organs that they play! Anyway the guys created a fine album that is between the borders of folk and metal, something that you HAVE to listen. A really extreme album, out of the metal fashion.

17.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

NIGHTFALL

"ELECTRONEGATIVE"

One of the most known greek bands all over the world are Nightfall, a band that has sprinted Hellenic heavy metal everywhere. "Electronegative" is a mcd that contains three unreleased tracks and "Diva", the hit-track from the new album "Diva Futura". This band plays with a very different sound than the past and with a very weird vocals, something that some fans will love and some will hate. On the other hand, Nightfall dares to reach something new in their music horizons and it seems that they succeed it. The new music sound of Nightfall only with one word someone could describe it. Progressive, but with the full sense of the word.

17.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

EMPYRIUM

"WHERE AT NIGHT THE WOOD GROUSE PLAYS"

First of all this isn't metal.Some of you may remember Empyrium from the time they were playing pagan black metal. Guys you have to forget these days. The new album of Empyrium is an anthem for mother earth through their melancholic folk sound. Between the deep forests and ugly citys, Empyrium with "Where at Night the Wood Grouse Plays" sends to all of us their protest against the victims of modern civilisation(?).The nine songs of the album are the living prove that in our days the spirit of our ancient fathers can live again in to us. Listen to "The Sad Song of the Wind" that recalls a the spirit that lived "Many Moons Ago...".

17.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

ENTHRONED

"THE APOCALYPSE MANIFESTO"

Enthroned is a band, which came up in the metal scene some years before with some releases, then disappeared in order to come back with a new label and album to reclaim their throne. About the album, it can be characterised as speed-intense black with antichristian lyrics and such. The speeds of the album are really very high. The best point of "... manifesto" is that it will satisfy all the black-metal enthusiasts, as it is a typical black opus. About the rest, the things are really worse, because "... manifesto" doesn't contain any elements of differentiation from the typical black metal soundings. My favourite track from this is the last one, "The scourge of god" which creates a good atmosphere with it's story-intro.

14/20

NGD

EPOCH OF UNLIGHT

"WHAT WILL BE HAS BEEN"

Black metal from U.S.A? Well, we are not used to listen black metal from the States but don't you think that it's a joke. Epoch of Unlight are playing good black metal of the Norwegian school and their debut(?) album "What Will Be Has Been" is a good choise for the fans of this style. Unfortunately the sound is not so good and the songs are losing the atmosphere that could have with a better sound. The guys from Memphis are doing a good job and it seems that in the future we should wait something much better. Some of my favourites songs are "Burning As One" and "Silver Mistress". The only mistake of Epoch of Unlight is that their playing "recycle" black metal and it's good for them to notice this, if they want to make a career.

14/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

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ESQARIAL

"AMORPHOUS"

Esqarial come from Poland and exist since 1991. They have released two demo tapes (one in '92 and one in '94). The music that the band plays is a very interesting kind of death metal. It is obvious that the guys are influenced by the huge Morbid Angel and generally the whole Florida's death metal scene, delivering a pounding, sharp and intense album. They also have added to their music some elements of good old thrash (German-like mainly) and melodic guitar solos. It is crystal clear that the band has a couple of very good guitarists and also capable drummer. The vocals are classic death metal growls: Credit must be given to their atmospheric intros "Gallery" and "Centurion" which sound like the intros of Morbid Angel. Definitely the highlight of the album is the song called "Earth" a melodic death metal masterpiece. Esqarial are definitely capable of making a big name...

17/20

PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

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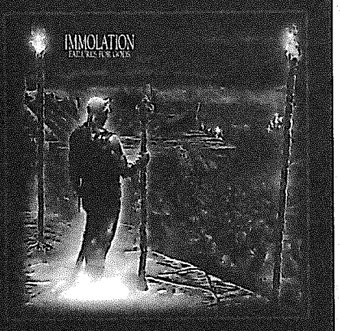
IMMOLATION

"FAILURE FOR GODS"



The guys that listens to underground death metal, is sure that knows the historical Immolation, a band that exists since 1987(as Rigor Mortis) and have two very good records, monuments for the underground. After a long time absence(you better read the interview),Immolation are back with an album that is ready to spread the fear. The hatred that "Failures for Gods" have with the barbarian instincts that Immolation have makes this album unique. This album is not for: mothers, priests, sissys, dogs(?).It's only for real metalheads, ready to feel the anger of Immolation. AAAAAAAARRRRRGGGGGG!

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

EVENFALL

"STILL IN THE GREY DYING"

I'm very sorry that I have to write in such a way about Evenfall. I would consider them, as a bad mark of our times (in music). You know with technology you can do everything, while it's much easier right now to buy a guitar and play. "Still..." is a piece of Swedish death/metal, along with some other influences (black metal, female vocals, etc). The problem is that this record is COMPLETELY BORING to my ears. I've heard of it many times without finding anything which would be considered as interesting or (do I want too much???) prototype/special. It just passes through my ears, leaving me the opinion that I've heard it before, elsewhere. If they were releasing a MCD / demo or they were just beginning things would be somehow different (there would be hope for the future), but now...

05/20

NGD

GRIP INC

"SOLDIFY"

Having followed Grip from their debut, I could say that soldify is the next logical step for the band. The lyrics remain pretty much the same, while the music is heading more and more to the half hardcore / half thrash metal style they've chosen. On the other hand (call it being more mature or more aged), they seem to strengthen more the heaviness and the atmosphere in some parts over speed, comparing to their previous release ("Nemesis"). This doesn't mean of course that we have a "slow" record in general something that can be heard in tracks like "Amped", "Vindicate", "Stresscase" and others. Last but not least, Lombardo remains of course a real killer behind the drums.

15/20

NGD

FREEDOM CALL

"STAIRWAY TO FAIRYLAND"

You might don't know Freedom Call but I'm sure you know Dan Zimmerman,

drummer of Gamma Ray. So here we have the debut album of the Germans Freedom Call. The band is playing melodic power metal in the veins of Helloween, Gamma Ray, Edguy and Angra especially in the vocals where the really talented Chris Bay surprise us. But that's it! Freedom Call are one of the bands that would like to be Helloween by "copying" them. It is a very good album, but with music that we listened a lot of times in the past. Dan Zimmerman on the other hand good as always, plays the same things with Gamma Ray, it's like I'm listening to "Somewhere out in space". Anyway, just in case you want to buy this album, you better listen to it first. Only for crazy powermetalers.

14/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

GAMMA RAY

"POWERPLANT"

After the not so successful release of "Somewhere out in space" the gods of power metal, Gamma Ray, are coming back with an album, real dynamite. "Powerplant" the name of the album and the power-metallers all around the worldl, are having a party! This time the sound of the album, gives the chance to Kai Hansen and his company to show their real possibilities and with 11 songs-hymns it seems that Gamma Ray are sitting again to their lost throne. In a period that power metal has met a lot of albums, good and bad, "Powerplant" is coming to learn us what really is power metal. Which song should I choose? "Send me a sign", "Strangers in the night" "Razorblade" or "Armageddon"?. I don't have to say more, to understand someone that this album is one of the best in 1999. Also, a surprise is the cover of "It's a sin "of Pet Shop Boys! Also I have to mention that the cover of the album is made from the god Derek Riggs, known from the covers of Iron Maiden. So, you haven't buy it yet?In that case I have to say only one thing: RUN!!!

18.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

HEAVEN'S GATE

"MENERGY"

Heaven's Gate was one of my favourite bands. With albums like "In Control" "Livin' in Hysteria" or even "Planet E" succeed to earn me as a fan while I was getting crazy with every note of them. But not anymore! Unfortunately Heaven's Gate aren't the band we expected(at least I was) to be. With "Menergy", Heaven's Gate seems that they've forgot their glorious past. Of course they haven't stop playing heavy metal, but their talent is in such high levels that I can't expect something less than the glorious albums of the past. Some moments that reminds what Heaven's Gate can really do are "Mastermind" and "Enter Eternity", without saving the album from moderation. And this mania with phone messages...Anyway I hope that the frozen gods of metal shall wake up and guide us again to the Gate of Heaven.

14/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

ROLAND GRAPOW

"KALEIDOSCOPE"

Is there anyone that doesn't know Helloween? Of course not. The guitarist of the legends of heavy metal, Roland Grapow has ready his second solo album "Kaleidoscope" and I the difficult role to write a review. This album is fantastic! With a new singer, Michael Vescera (ex-Malmsteen) and a lot of guests, Roland Grapow composed an album real dynamite. I can't understand why doesn't he writes songs like that for Helloween (Michael, do you hear me?).Anyway, the songs are great and especially "Walk on Fire", "Listen to the Lyrics" and "Reaching Higher".In the last two Jens Johansson plays keyboards and you don't have to imagine how great are the songs. Generally, this album is going to be admired from the fans of melodic power metal and remember to the pumpkin fans the good old days Buy it with out second thinking.

19/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

GOD DETHRONED

"BLOODY BLASPHEMY"

God Dethroned come from Holland and this is their second release following "The Grand Grimoire", which is unknown to me. "Bloody Blasphemy" is one of the best things I've heard these times in the death metal genre for two reasons: Firstly the vocals are clear to hear, yet brutal, a good combination (difficult to be found in their style). Secondly there is such a mixture of playing singing, sparse use of keyboards, creating an album that it didn't bore me to hear it from the beginning to the end quite many times! Two of my favourite songs there were "Firebreath" (with the anti-English lyrics ;-)) as well as "Boiling Blood", yet there is something I didn't like that much: I like their anti-Christian lyrics somehow, but the whole image and attitude remind me of Cradle of Filth (posing and over-acting in a not so sincere way), but thankfully it doesn't affect their music.

18/20

NGD

GODDESS OF DESIRE

"SYMBOL OF TRIUMPH"

Goddess of desire, even from the first hearing or from the artwork of the CD are a krama of older h/m bands. The music is something between Motorhead and Venom. They're dressed somehow like Destruction at "Sentence of death" (or is it Motorhead at "Orgasmatron"?) and the lyrics are something like Gehena - Satanic in a theatrical way (we are friends of Satan and such) or they're talking about women, bikes, leather, drinks etc... . Of course they have nothing new to add to the metal scene, or anything. Of course such stuff has been played before in better ways. There are songs like "Ride" (lyrics: I'm riding my bike, meet&f**k a girl, go to a gig, while music of this song is just like Motorhead, nothing more nothing less), Wimps and bastards (how they punished some wimps), Metal Forever (how loyal they are to this music, in a pure h/m track) and others in the same feeling. Concluding, without giving anything new they offer a great bunch of fun, as a show-band, giving theatrical gigs etc. Hope to see them on stage someday...

15/20

NGD

LUNAR AURORA

"Of Stargated and Bloodstained Celestial Spheres"

Imagine the typical black metal sound of late 90's (not Dimmu Borgir or Cradle of Filth thankfully, I mean the production and the tight playing, something more like "Nemesis Divina"). Now that you've done this add some electro beats now and then (three times or something in the whole album) as well as some effects (whips etc). The next thing you must do is to consider all vocals in German (Ich kann nicht Deutch jetzt.) and you are getting to know what Lunar Aurora is all about. I can say in general that I enjoyed the album because it has many interesting parts in it. It doesn't loose it's freshness as it remains brutal from beginning to end without becoming boring. Again here we have enhancing presence of keyboards (not taking leading role anywhere). The only problem for me is that I can't understand what they're talking about as all lyrics are in German.

16/20

NGD

(www.rettenburg.de)

HADES ALMIGHTY

"MILLENIUM NOCTURNE"

Since 1992 Hades almighty are giving us awesome black metal based on the old receipt of Bathory in albums like Under the sign of the black mark . In this c.d. they use the same formula . Mid tempo , raw and primitive black metal . Even that basically I knew what I was about to hear I was surprised by the band's progress , even though they are in the scene from the days of Old Funeral . Different elements like old doom metal have entered their music giving it a new style. The sound is really heavy and clear . The songs are constructed with magic and purpose to transfer a feeling of chaos and pain to the listener . I will always consider their vocalist one of the best ever . If you are sad that the old days have passed just go out and buy it .If you to young to know just hear it and you will be overwhelmed by this old band's primitive style of black metal .

17/20

KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

HYPERION

"WHERE STONE IS UNSCARRED"

First of all what a beautiful artwork! I don't remember the last time I've seen such a fantastic cover(note: it's made by Keith Parkinson).Anyway, Hyperion are coming from Italy and they're playing, what else, power metal. This is the debut album of Hyperion under the name "Where Stone is Unscarred". Although it is the first album of the Italians power metalers it seems like they play for a long time ago. Their strongest advantage is their singer Matt McHantin, a guy with very good voice. Listening to the album it's easy to understand that after Skylark and Rhapsody, Hyperion are the new leaders of Italian power metal. The epic emotion that "Where Stone is Unscarred" has, with songs like "Till the End of Time" or "Shade of Sin" travels the listener back to the ancient Egypt where mystery and power are one. I think that Massacre won the lottery.

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

HYPOCRISY

"HYPOCRISY DESTROYS WACKEN"

When last year I heard the rumours that after "Final Chapter",]Hypocrisy would split up, I can't say that I was the happiest man on earth. No ,I'm not a big fan of them and I can say that only a couple of album, I liked very much. But everybody knows what Hypocrisy really are for heavy metal. So, thank God, Zeus, e.t.c, Hypocrisy are back stronger than ever. The first live album of Hypocrisy is the gift of them to their fans which supported them with all their powers. The songs are perfect played and the sound is very good, something that is very hard for a live album. Hypocrisy gives all they power and hate on "Hypocrisy Destroys Wacken" and proves to the fans what really is Death metal. This album has also four new songs that the two of them are hardcore and are also in the new album of Hypocrisy. Anyway, the fans of Hypocrisy have already buy it. Do the same.

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

LABYRINTH

"TIMELESS CRIME"

The last two years belongs to Italy. Between Domine, Rhapsody, Skylark, Time Machine, Mesmerize and many more, Labyrinth made the surprise with the excellent "Return To Heaven Denied" . Well, after the success that Labyrinth had, it's time for the next step of the Italians powermetalers with an mcd under the name "Timeless Crime". In this 5-track CD there is a new song, "Save Me", that is in the same style Labyrinth plays and 4 other songs. The three older songs "Out of Memory", "In the Shade" and "Falling Rain" are from the albums "Piece of Time", "No Limits" and "Return to Heaven Denied" and in this way you can have an idea about the past of Labyrinth. But the surprise is the cover of "Die For My Sins" of Sanctuary! In general, "Timeless Crime" is a good proposal for this hot summer, something that will refresh you and send you to heaven(Hellas?).

18.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

CLIVE NOLAN & OLIVER WAKEMAN

"JABBERWOCKY"

The words never are enough to talk about Rick Wakeman, one of the best keyboard players on earth. Well, it seems that his son Oliver continues the tradition that his famous father created. After his first solo album "Heaven's Isle" and in co-operation with Clive Nolan(Arena, Pendragon, Shadowland) created an album that is a mixture of art and dream. Just take a look at the guest musicians(hold your breath):Bob Catley(ex-Magnum, Hard Rain), Tracy Hitchings (Landmarq, Strangers on a Train) ,Paul Allison (ex-Sleepwalker) ,Pete Banks (ex-Yes), Ian Salmon (Shadowland) Jon Jeary (Threshold), Peter Gee (Pendragon) and Tony Fernadez (Rick Wakeman Band) As you realise, "Jabberwocky" is a symphonic-progressive rock party! A real fairy-tale that guides you to a fantastic world, where music and magic are one. Live this music experience and let your dreams become true...

P.S. Of course a grade is not enough to represent the real value of "Jabberwocky"

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

KREATOR

"ENDORAMA"

When I read someday that "... the new album of Kreator will surprise and divide their fans...", I thought that they'd follow more industrial ways so that their metal-fans wouldn't follow. Instead they surprised me as well with "Endorama". It seems that Kreator have followed more Goth-ways in their music, lowering the speed and insisting on the atmosphere and the good playing, of course with strong and loud outbursts they've used in the past. Only two songs of the whole twelve ("Soul Eraser" and "Pandemonium") reminded me of their previous releases. The lyrics and the whole feeling is more melancholic as (according to them) a new age begins and people have to follow,seeing the end of their world till now (and so the title, "Endorama"), and the songs are in the same mood. Many of those who "tolerated" the experiments of the band will

think about leaving now, while I would suggest everyone to listen to some tracks of the album, before deciding to buy it or not. Concluding it is good, it has elements of Kreator in many parts, but it tastes so different to my ears. "Endorama" is really a surprise, but I don't know if it's a good or a bad one after all...
17/20
NGD

LAKE OF TEARS
"FOREVER AUTUMN"
After Anathema and Amorphis, it's time for Lake of Tears to follow the "road" that Pink Floyd made first. I don't know if the band changed style for money but I know for sure that "Forever Autumn" is a great album. Sometimes reminds me the fantastic". Dark side of the Moon"! The swedish Lake of Tears have left behind their past and now through the sounds of melodic gothic are guides to a trip to an other dimension. The fourth album of Lake of Tears proves that inspiration is never gonna die and with songs like "So Fell Autumn Rain", "Pagan Wish" and "To Blossom Blue", the god of music gave to us another great band. This album is for open-minded fans that wants to listen something qualitative. As for the others, you're going to lose the a magic music experience that "Forever Autumn", creates.
18.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
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ON THORNS I LAY
"CRYSTAL DREAMS"
It's something incredible, when I'm thinking of the progress that On Thorns I Lay made. I remember when I first listened to them. They had a different name, Phlebotomy, and a different kind of music(death metal).But what is happening now is fantastic! The band is following more melancholic sound in the veins of My Dying Bride and new Anathema and created on of the best greek metal records ever! O.K, it might is too much, but you have to listen to "Crystal Tears" to understand the feeling that On Thorns I Lay have. One of the greatest advantages of this album, are the fantastic female vocals. The girl has fantastic voice, you think she is an angel! Songs like "Crystal Tears", "Eden" or "Enigma", are ready to charm you. Plus the great, clear, sound that "Crystal Tears" has. I don't think you need more to take right away.
18/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

LEFAY
"SEVENTH SEAL"
Morgana Lefay are back, but with a different name due to legal problems and a new label (noise records). Their line up has also changed (3 members have departed) but that didn't have much effect to their sound. The "Seventh Seal" is musically near to their previous album "Malefícium": heavy, mid-tempo mainly power doom metal. The way the riffs sound reminds me of good old Metallica of "Black album" but in a more doom way. The production of the album is clear, with volume on the guitars, giving a fresh sound that makes the album more easily listenable. Their lyrics are based mainly on topics like the utter death, the apocalypse etc. and my matching with the structure of the songs they give a rather groovy (with the good meaning of the word) outcome. The old fans will be definitely satisfied and the new fans will have the opportunity to discover a doom-power band that definitely deserves their attention, with songs like "the end of living", "I am", "the boon he gives" and many others
16/20
PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

LEPROSY
"LIEL"
Leprosy, in their first demo, "Liel" follow the roots of death metal the way Florida's bands taught. Although I'm not a fan of this scene, I really liked "Liel", because it combines good production, rough tunes and yet clear enough but brutal vocals, giving an interesting result. The only defect is that the band falls in a trap named "fashion", by using some female vocals in the demo. The problem is that the female singer is awful, ruining two songs, where she participates, making the demo going far away from perfection, where it should belong, if simply these vocals didn't exist. That's all about the first attempts which, according to my opinion, shows one promising band for the future.
17/20
NGD

MUTINY
"GUILTY AS CHARGED"
In an older review, I had mentioned that Mutiny are the new hope of Hellenic metal. They had impressed me with their first demo "Faded Pages" and I was sure that the guys could do something better in the future. And now it's time for that something. Having a new singer, the talented Alexis Zervanos, and desire for work, Mutiny created a masterpiece. This promo I 'm holding, "Guilty as Charged", contains two of the best songs I've ever heard from a greek band. The first song, "Guilty as Charged", has a lot of influences from Mercyful Fate and Iron Maiden but al- ways with the personal sound of Mutiny and the great voice of Alexis makes it great. But the HIT track is the ten-minute "Under the Cross-Bone Flag". It's fantastic! I have to listen such a good epic song since Rhapsody released their "Legendary Tales". The power and feeling that this song has, only if you'll listen it you 'll understand it. The voice of Alexis in very high levels and inspiration at the best. Plus the fantastic sound that is very important for a self-financed. This time, Mutiny are looking for a contract with a labels, so labels open your deaf ears.
19.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
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TIME MACHINE
"ETERNITY ENDS"
One of the most difficult things in the progressive scene is not to copy bands like Dream Theater, Fates Warning, Queensryche and Time Machine are one of the few bands that succeed it. After the not so good "Shades Of Time" the Italians progsters are making a powerful comeback, this time with a concept album about the life of Jesus Christ. The influences from Queensryche still exists but with their own way, Time Machine succeed to create their own special sound and a very good album. Highlights of the album are the songs "I Believe Again" and "Behind The Cross" which makes the difference in the album. I'm waiting for something better. Till then...
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
web site : http://timemachine.cjb.net/

MADD HUNTER
"SILENCE OF THE LAMB"
From the first time I received this CD, (and I don't know if it's good or bad) I knew what it was all about: American power. I've heard Madd Hunter's previous release ("" here I've to mention that Madd Hunter are mainly Phil Grasso - vocals-guitars etc with a drummer aiding him), as well as Steel Assassin CD (the release of Phil Grasos's previous band). Having all those on mind, "Silence..." disappointed me for many reasons: firstly nothing more has been done to improve the musical style from the previous album except the drums that now sound better. Secondly we have more instrumentals and covers ("Take on the world", "The sound of silence") which aren't performed well. So although I admire what Phil is doing, under difficult circumstances, I have to recommend the CD only to those who really liked his previous work which are quite many as I've been informed. Others should check other things.
13/20
NGD
Contact:GME records, 319 Centre Ave. Suite 175, Rockland, MA 02370 USA. or GME - dist @ worldnet.att.net.

MALEVOLENCE
"MARTYRIALIZED"
After Moonspell, chaos. That's what happens in the metal scene of Portugal. Of course there are a lot of good bands but none of them succeed to break the borders of Portugal except Moonspell. Well, I think it's time for Malevolence, the next big thing in death metal. The second album of Portuguese deathsters "Martyrialized" is absolutely great! It's been a long time ago since I was stuck with a CD and "Martyrialized" doesn't leave my c.d.-player from the day I got it! This cd is qualitative death metal, a real peace of art for death metal generally. Especially songs like "The Brotherhood of Christ" and "Les Salles Obscures de Rose Noire XVIII" stacks in to your mind from the first time your listen to them. I don't have to say more. This is an album that every metalhead must buy.
19/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

MANES
"UNDER EIN BLODRAUT MAANE"
This is the first time I have ever heard of Manes . They claim to be the norwegian black metal . I must admit that I was surprised when I heard their music . It is the first time I see such a group. They don't have even one idea that is completely theirs . I have riffs showing Emperor , Horna , Dark Throne , Burzum even Cradle of filth . If you are into black metal and never heard this bands you will definitely (despite the mediocre sound) like the c.d. . It is sad because it seems that they could have done something different and truly interesting because they know how to play their instruments . "Mit Irone slar til evig tid" is a very nice song . To sad that the 90% of the riffs come from Emperor and Burzum . If they develop a more personal sound , make a better production and hire a drummer they are capable of many things .

MARDUK
"PANZER DIVISION MARDUK"
One year after riding the wings of the night. Now I just have to forget that and get ready to feel the sensation of driving a Panzer along with the warmachine of Marduk. It's amazing how a group can have five records and every time manage to be better , faster , nearer to perfection . Whenever I listen a new Marduk CD, I always think that this will be their best album for as long as they exist and they always get to fool me. When I thought that "Nightwing" was just a marvelous album there comes "Panzer division Marduk" to remind me that they do almost have no limits in their expectations and abilities. But let's talk about this new album. It's really fast, totally black, really fierce, very technical and metal for sure. The ultimate experience of war through tracks like "Baptism by my fire" and many more. If you are fans of the romantic style of metal or you are offended by satanic and war lyrics please stay away. The real fans of Marduk should know what they are about to listen, but they will also be amazed by what that group has achieved and frighten by what they can achieve in the future. I am not putting the 20 grade because I am absolutely sure that the next album will be better.
19.9/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

Surprising the solo in "ulen liv ligger landet ode" that reminds me of Pink Floyd .
12/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

MANGLED
"ANCIENT TIMES"
They claim to play brutal grave rock, someone from that must by now asking hiself the same I was asking me when I read this in the newsletter: how does brutal grave rock sound? Mangled's opinion about that is that brutal grave rock sounds like a more brutal version of something between My Dying Bride (old - no violin) and Paradise Lost (Gothic era) . The mixture of clean , extreme and chaotic vocals will send you back to the times of the ancient Roman civilization as they say in the newsletter. Some pure brutal death metal tracks that are included don't spoil the atmosphere. They in contrary add another dimension as the album flows. They only thing I would say against them is that some songs should not be included because they are totally out of the atmosphere that reigns throughout the CD.
15/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

MINDLAND
"LAND OF MIND"
Sometimes the sound destroys the whole effort of a band. That's what happens with Mindland. They have good ideas but the sound and especially their singer destroys them. They're influences are coming from bands like Helloween and Iron Maiden and their ideas are nice but they have a lot of bad parts that I mentioned before. This demo-tape is nothing that could touch a fan. Maybe in the future if Mindland understand their mistakes and work as a professional band.
09/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

MIRROR LIES
"LOSING ME"
This is the first step of Mirror Lies in the metal scene with the song "Losing Me". This track is a ballad with a lot of strong elements. The guys are playing power-progressive metal and "Losing Me" is a good composition, but the vocals aren't so powerful as should be. They have good ideas and with a lot of work they can do something better in the future. Also the vocals needs practise to get better. I hope to be a liar but the guys right now aren't something special that

could impress you.
10/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
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MOB RULES
"SAVAGE LAND"
Does Mob Rules reminds something to you? Well, here we have a band that started as a tribute band to Black Sabbath and now releases their debut album called "Savage Land", an album that is the pleasant surprise for 1999. Mob Rules are coming from Germany and it seems that they continue the tradition that Germany has in melodic power metal. Their strongest weapon is their singer Klaus Dirks and with their musical skills that it seems they have, Mob Rules are leaving promises for something better in the future. Lyrically "Savage Land" is a concept album based in the movies "Mad Max" and "Waterworld"(fortunately it doesn't follow the failure of the movie) and someone could realise it from the very beautiful cover that "Savage Land" has. The album is listening very pleasant having as best moments the homonymous trilogy, "Secret Signs" and "End Of All Days". Recommended for the friends of power metal.
16.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

MOONSHADE
"LOST IN A NIGHTMARE"
Blind Guardian would surely feel great if they ever hear about Moonshade. That's why this band could be considered as a major influence from this band from Alexandroupolis (Hellas). Someone can come to this point just by reading the tracklist where "The Hobbit" is being played as a cover. Concerning the rest of the demo, we have power metal, being marked by bands such as Blind Guardian, or the rest German-school. Everything would be fine, if we didn't have the sound quality to f**k it all, making the demo difficult to hear. If someone can surpass this, then it's OK. As for the band, they surely won my sympathy and I hope that they will be able to work under better conditions in the future, as well as to develop more their own style. (The demo comes with noticable artwork, inspired by AD&D drawings).
NGD
Contact: MOONSHADE, c/o John SKourtis, Alamanas 13, 68100 Alexandroupolis, HELLAS

OVERKILL
"NECROSHINE"
As you know overkill is one of the legendary 80's speed/thrash bands, but in their latest albums are influenced more from the hardcore scene, having more dissapointing releases. Now, in 1999 they try to come back to return back to a more thrashy sound. They are still more influenced by hardcore bands but now they seem more thrash and have composed more inspired tracks like "Necroshine" or "Let's pray". The production of the album is ultra-heavy with bulldozer-like guitar sound and pounding drums, elements which create a heavy feeling on their mainly mid-tempo songs. Generally this album is a rather good attempt of a cult band that somewhere lost it's way...
15/20
PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

NEVERMORE
"Dreaming Neon Black"
Nevermore definitely one of the top-5 bands of the 90's strikes back with their album "Dreaming Neon Black". 1998 finds them with a new guitarist, Tim Calvert (ex-Forbidden, Lethal), ad a darker musical approach. The songs of the album are less complicated then "The politics of Ecstasy" epic. The main difference of the musical direction in the two albums lies in the fact that "Politics..." is full of rage and insanity, while "D.N.B." is completely soaked in depression and pessimism. The progressive elements have been clearly reduced, although they still exist on songs like "The death of Passion" but the psychedelic atmosphere is clearer and more frequent. There are even some elements of gothic / dark wave that add fantastic moments on the album. The production is once again perfect, with volume and depth, because of the console magician, Neil Kernon. Wanel Dane's vocals prove once again that he's one of the 5 best metal vocalists. The bass and rhythm/lead guitars are in a very high level as always. Nevermore sound unique, with a personal way. There are no highlights on the album because the whole album is itself a highlight. Buy it or else suffer the consequences.
19/20 ("Politics..." gets a 20)
PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

NAGELFAR
"SRONTGORRTH" ("DIE MACHT ERFASSTE DAS MEINE WIE DIE ANGST DAS BLUT DER ANDEREN")
Probably the worst c.d. I have ever heard . It is really a disappointment after their first album which gave us hopes for a better album . This a c.d. consisted of five tracks of total duration 70 minutes . The sound is awful , the vocals mediocre , the atmosphere is like watching a funny thriller , the industrial (in my opinion trance) elements are completely ridiculous , the songs are too big and could about 10 minutes smaller each . They do have some good ideas that unfortunately are lost among bullshit . They won't take a zero for this ideas .
3/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

NARNIA
"LONG LIVE THE KING"
Malmsteen+Europe=Narnia. That's the style of the swedish band, that with their second album "Long Live the King" are leaving hopes for the future. Unfortunately, the band doesn't play something new, although they have the skills to do it. It's like I'm listening to "Marching Out" or "Trilogy". Narnia is a band that can make something great, but their persistence to Malmsteen leaves them stagnant. They have a very good guitarist and singer and with a lot of work, especially for the identity of the band, we 'll gonna talk about the new leaders of power metal. But 'till then, they don't deserve more than...
13.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

NIGHTFALL
"DIVA FUTURA"
I hope that you had a look at the review of "Electronegative". Well, here we have the new, sixth, album of the greek(?) Nightfall. Two new members, Phil Anton(guitars) and Mark Cross(drums) belongs from now and on to nightfall. As I said in the previous review, Nightfall totally changed their sound and from the area of death metal, now influences from bands like Marilyn Manson, Paradise Lost(from One Second)and Metallica (Metallica album period) are showing up. Of course the talent of this band everybody knows, but this new modern sound that Nightfall wants to follow, I don't think that fits to them. Maybe, this experiment is more trendy but in my ears I prefer "Lesbian Show" or "Macabre Sunsets" period. I wish that Nightfall shall return to the style that made them famous and us happy.
16/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

NOCTES
"VEXILLA REGIS PRODEUNT INFERNI"
Another children of father's Dissection family.I found a lot of similarities between Noctes and the greatest death/black metal band from Sweden . I must admit that they are pretty good and they do continue their hopegiving march from their debut album "Pandemonic Requiem". The production is very good and clear so that you can hear all instruments and be able to enjoy at the highest grade the album. I enjoyed their sence of dark melodies and raw black energy . They do not use a ton of melody and the brutality that has been lost in the last two years from the swedish death metal scene.I am satisfied that someone from sweden realised that you can't play Iron Maiden riffs and hope to be the new hope of the death metal scene.
14/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

NOKTURNAL MORTUM
"GOAT HORNS"
This album had been recorded few years before (1996) but the band didn't had the means to release it on CD so it was released this year. Another thing about this band is that they come from Ukrania, being the first band from this country being known to me. About their music: I can say that "Goat Horns" is a piece of epic black metal and this is where they show their own personality. They have two keyboard players, something that adds much to their sound (the epic-atmospheric part). The positive think here is that although the keyboards are everywhere in the album, they never play a major role (except intro/outro) pushing back guitars/bass or drums. Here we have the bass and the drums acting as main soundings, creating a result that reminds me of my favorite black metal band, Satyricon. So concluding, Nokturnal won me because of their unique personality and ability to maintain balances in their work. The only defect is that the lyrics aren't included (I'd really want to read them).
18/20
NGD
Contact : Nokturnal Mortum, P.O. Box 8622, Kharkov, 310144, Ukraine. or www.rusmetal.ru/mortum

OBSCENITY
"DEMO-NIAC (THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM)"
I have never heard of Obscenity so I must tell you what I think about them thinking that you probably don't know them either . They do play death metal ,pretty much like Death in "Spiritual Healing" like the first Morbid Angel albums but in a more atmospheric vein . I recognized one or two refrains reminding My Dying Bride from "As the flower withers" . Here we do have their demos from 1991 to 1993 , but I will consider them as demos because they are ten years old so they should either way publish something good . And of course they did so 'cause the demos do sound pretty good . The sound is pretty goo d , the songs are good , everything is good but nothing very good . So...
14/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

NIGHTWISH
"OCEANBORN"
I think that the finns wants to get us crazy. Otherwise, I can't explain this wave of good albums that comes from the Scandinavian country . It was one and a half year ago when I first listened to Nightwish and I have to say that "Angels Fall First" had impressed me, at this point of time. But what happens with "Oceanborn" is fantastic! The 10 songs that "Oceanborn", second album of Nightwish, have are masterpieces! Only with a gun in my head I could say that "Gethsemane", "Sacrament of Wilderness" and "Riddler" makes the difference, without meaning that the rest songs ain't good. Their music is a mix of melodic power metal and atmospheric elements, that with the fantastic female operatic vocals of Tarja creates a very different and interesting album. From now and on Nightwish are one of my favourite bands, as for you, you better find it alone. Buy or dye.
19/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
http://www.nightwish.com

OLETHRIO RIGMA
"FIGHT FOR THE INNOCENT"
One of the major problems of the hardcore scene, here in Hellas is the total absence of professionalism and consequence (bands created just for some lives, record something and then disappear, etc). This is why, I believe, metallers can't cope with this scene. Olethrio Rigma fortunately come to change this scenery, with their music as well as with other actions (they have founded themselves two compilations in order to make small bands known to more people). About the point that it matters most, the music we have a very good record, with a band showing 14 thrash/core tracks, that convinces everyone that they have spent much time on studio preparing and trying the songs. Really good with music/lyrics sticking to your ear. Also I have to mention that they use three languages (I don't believe I've heard this again): Hellenic (mainly), English and German. Only defect according to my tastes: overuse of female vocals in such way that they annoyed my ears many times while listening the album.
17/20
NGD
Contact: Olethrio rigma, N.Xilouri 48,14123 Likovrisi,Athens,Greece

PATRIC RONDAT
"ON THE EDGE"
If you like instrumental music, it's sure that you know the French guitarist Patric Rondat. Until his third album "Amphibia", I thought that Rondat couldn't do something good. But fortunately, I was wrong. "Amphibia", surprised me and that's what is going on again with his fourth album "On the Edge". The way that Rondat mixes jazz, rock and metal is the great advantage of "On the Edge". The songs are technical but in a way that the listener doesn't getting boring. In this album there are two great guests. Didier Lockwood who plays violin in two songs and the master of jazz, the pianist Michel Petruciani(R.I.P) who plays piano in "Why Do You Do Things Like That". This album is dedicated to his memory. "On the Edge" is an album that the fans of instrumental will love. Between them, put and me on.
18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

AXEL RUDI PELL

"THE BALLADS II"

Axel Rudi Pell, is a musician with his own history in heavy metal. This album contains ballads from the discography of the German guitarist. Always with influences from Rainbow, Pell with the talent that made him well known to the fans, presents to us songs, real anthems to love. Don't think that this album is for sissies. Always heavy metal had a romantic side and Axel Rudi Pell represents it with "The Ballads II". I have the feeling that this album is written for all the people that are in love and for everybody that feels love everyday(of course and for you my beautiful sunset).Try to reach some thing different and you won't disappoint the romantic side of yourself.

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

VANISHING POINT

"IN THOUGHT"

After Vauxdvihl, Pegasus and of course the gods AC/DC, it's time for another band from Australia to surprise us, because this country hasn't got used us to export heavy metal bands. I'm talking about Vanishing Point, a band that with their debut album "In Thought" proves that the country of kangaroos and koalas can have and a very good progressive band. Vanishing Point are already famous in their country and it's time for the rest of the world to know them better. Their influences are coming from bands like Dream Theater and Queensryche and with the personal touch of the Australians progsters a very good album is a fact. Best moments of "In Thought" are "In Company of Darkness" "Forgotten Self" and "Inner Peace", songs that proves the talent of Vanishing Point. Should we talk about the new big band in progressive metal? Time will tell. Till then...

17/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Contact: Vanishing point , P.O.Box 593, St. albans 3021 , Melbourne VIC , Australia

e-mail: vanishingpoint1@hotmail.com

POVERTY'S NO CRIME

"SLAVE TO THE MIND"

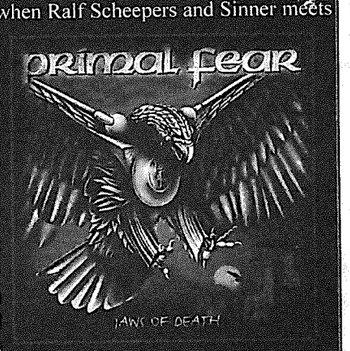
The first time I listened to Poverty's No Crime, I thought that there are another progressive metal band with nothing new to offer. They had the skills but they never done something remarkable. Well, these things belongs to the past cause "Slave to the Mind" is an remarkable album. This time, Poverty's No Crime created a unique masterpiece for progressive. Of course there are everywhere influences from bands like Dream Theater and Queensryche but the band succeed not to steal the bands but to take the atmosphere from them. I think that Poverty's No Crime created the album that will make the, mfamous. Listen to songs like "Access Denied" and "Now and Again" and you'll see why Poverty's No Crime are the new big hope for progressive metal. It's a same for every fan of progressive metal, to lose one of the best progressive albums of 1999.

18.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

PRIMAL FEAR

"JAWS OF DEATH"



What happens when Ralf Scheepers and Sinner meets each other? A music bomb ready to guide you in a never-ending head-banging! After the very good debut album Primal Fear are coming back with their second album "Jaws of Death" to prove that real heavy metal is still alive. Ralf, good as always, gives to Primal Fear the power that a band needs and makes the fans of Gamma Ray to get sad. Kai why did you fired Ralf? Let's go back to our subject after this short complain. This album is a classy. Especially songs like "Church of Blood", "Under your Spell", "Nation in Fear" and "Hatred in my Soul" are some of the best I listened to, in the last few years. At last it's time for Ralf and his company to get well known. Also I have to say that there is a powerful cover of "Kill the King"(RAINBOW)that really kicks some asses. This is an album that every metal fan all over the world must get. HEAVY METAL IS THE LAW.

19.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

POWERDROPS

"SEVEN FEELINGS"

Powerdrops are one of those unfortunate bands, who although operating for many years didn't have the chance to see their work out on a full length LP/CD. The same situation has occurred with many other bands here in Hellas (Power Crue, Marauder etc). They are a typical heavy/power band, with hard and sometimes melodic vocals. They believe in what they're doing (operating many years is a proof for this) and this is reflected to their work, and the very good way of playing and forming as a band. Unfortunately this kind of music has been heard again and againlimiting Powerdrops strictly to a power metal audience. So I'm forced to re-comment "Seven Feelings" to the power metal enthusiasts, while other fans should avoid it.

14/20

NGD

Contact :Powerdrops, P.P. Germanou 5, Nea Filadelfia, 143 42, Athens, Hellas

STEEL PROPHET

"DARK HALLUCINATIONS"

Sometimes I wonder if Iron Maiden made more damage than good in heavy metal. I'm saying that because a lot of bands are trying to recycle the music of the GODS of heavy metal than to offer something new. They try to be clones of Iron Maiden hurting in that way music. Anyway, here we have a good example for all this "clones", the Americans Steel Prophet. The Americans metallers ain't a new band, they already have three albums and a mcd and "Dark Hallucinations" is their fourth album and maybe their chance to get well known to the fans all over the world. Their music is a strange mix of American power metal and Iron Maiden in a very interesting way, something that makes them different. They have a very good singer and the possibilities to be famous, but their love(?) for Iron Maiden doesn't help them to find a different identity, something that is necessary for a band with ambitions like Steel Prophet have. I'm sure that if the band will find their own identity soon all of us will talk about them.

PS I'm wondering, in which album of Iron Maiden is "Spectres"...

15.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

ROCKBITCH

"MOTOR DRIVEN BIMBO"

O.k, everybody knows that anything with naked women on(magazines, movies, e.t.c) sells a lot. But I can't understand why things like that are happening in our music. This band has six women(?) which is the good part and a guy, which is the bad part. I don't think that we should talk about music cause Rockbitch try to play something between rock, hardcore and metal, without success. With tittle songs like "Sex and the Devil" and "Nympho", someone understand the I.Q of Rockbitch. The advantages of Rockbitch are their good asses and breasts but it's nothing that a normal metal fan should buy. Rockbitch are synonymous with commercial operating of the labels to the fans. So you better buy a Playboy than "Motor Driven Bimbo".

PS One point for each girl.

6/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

SAMAEL

"ETERNAL"

I don't think that Samael needs any introductions to the metal audience. With albums like "Ceremony of Opposites and "Rebellion", Samael wrote their own history in heavy metal. This time Samael with their sixth album "Eternal", continues their space trip to other music galaxies that started some years ago. Only Samael could unite in such a way metal and "Technology" and "Eternal" is the prove of their music intelligence. The dark atmosphere with the heavy guitars and electronic sounds make "Eternal" unique, an album that is decades in front of today's music. "Year Zero" and "Supra Karma" are the songs that I adore from "Eternal". Once more the space /gothic/black metallers(?) Samael proved why they are one of the most important bands of the last decade. May their music live "Eternal".

18/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

MICHAEL SCHENKER

"THE UNFORGIVEN"

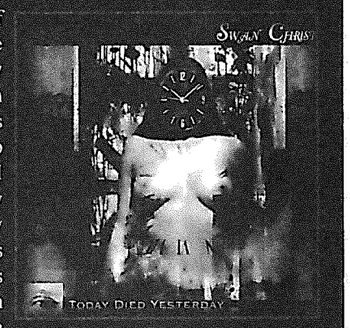
Michael Schenker, a living legend, a real guitar hero that has given a lot to hard rock / Heavy metal music. He is the main reason for the existance of divine albums like "Phenomenon" ans "Lights out" of U.F.O., "Assaulkt attack" and "Built to destroy" of MSG and many others. He has worked with many legends of rock, like Scorpions and recently Joe Satriani on the G3 tour with Uli "god" Roth. He has influenced many guitarists with his unique style and his trademark melodies, elements which appear also here, on "Unforgiven". Generally the album is a good sample of hard rock with a heavy sound. Michael here tries to make a connection with 70's classic rock, but he also adds some modern touches to his music, some sharp riffs etc. The rest of the musicians ot the album are very cappable and when they are given the space they prove it (sometimes the album sounds like progressive). "The unforgiven" might not be the best work of M.S. but is definetly a steo forward to his huge personality's astonishing career, with songs like "Rude awakening", "What a mess I've made", "Fat city" and the enormous "The tower", songs that justify that M.S. is one of the best remaining hard rock artists.

16/20

PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

SWAN CHRISTY

"TODAY DIED YESTERDAY"



It was about a year ago when the Greeks Swan Christy, with their debut album "One with the Swan" gave us a lot of promises about the future. And here we have the second step of Christys in the discography with an album that the words ain't enough to describe it. I can only express my admire for this band. It seems that Swan Christy with their album "Today Died Yesterday" are a step in frond of the other bands, especially Greeks, by making 8 great songs. I can't believe that in Greece belongs one of the best band in Europe at the time(I'm talking always about new bands)!I have to make a special mention about my favourite songs "Today Died Yesterday", "Resurrection If Possible" and My Home(away from home) which give us a taste of what is going to happen in the future. Congratulations!

19/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

SHADOWS OF SUNSET

"REFLECTION FROM AFAR"

They do play death/black metal, they truly do. They don't play heavy metal with howling vocals. They are honourable enough to play what they truly like away from every fashion or wave. They manage to tie together death and black metal in a way only Dissection have managed this far. Don't be fooled as they don't copy the Swedish god's for they do have personal elements in their music. They must take better care of the vocals next because they sound fake and overdone. They come from a country with tradition in metal Finland and seem that they are capable of continuing this tradition. I believe that the story of shadows of sunset will continue. Songs like 'The beckoning of shadows' is a clue leading to that.

14/20

KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

Contact : c/o Pasi Uotila, Aapelinkula 4 as 1, 21420 Lieto, Finland

SHARON

"EDGE OF TIME"

No, this band has nothing to do with the goddess Sharon Stone. This guys are coming from Germany and "Edge of Time" is their debut album. Their music is between melodic hard rock and heavy metal. Their songs are "commercial" and I'm sure that with a good promotion they'll climb at the top of the charts. Sometimes reminds me Bon Jovi and the way he started. "Edge of Time" is an album that someone can listen it with pleasure from the first song "Sweet Family"(which is the best of the album) till the end. Also good moments are the ballad "Take it or Leave it" and "Work". Recommended for the fans of hard rock and not only.

15.5/20

NIKOS TZOUANNIS

SKEW SISKIN

"WHAT THE HELL"

Let's rock'n'roll. That's the message that Skew Siskin gives with their music. I don't know a lot about Skew Siskin, but the sure thing is that "What The Hell" is a nice album. Their style is something between rock'n'roll and Motorhead, with strong, and good, female vocals. Take a look at the songs and you'll understand how serious Skew Siskin have take life: "Spend the Night With Me", "Sex,Love,DanceMusic, "Let's Get drunk & Screw" and many more! That the meaning of life, joy and Skew Siskin knows it. "What The Hell" is an album

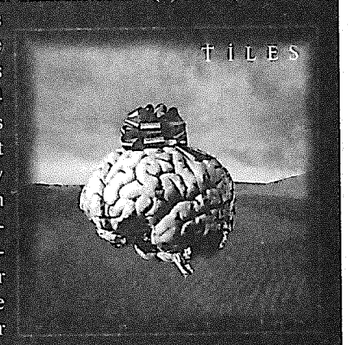
that will like to the fans of rock'n'roll and Motorhead of course. Perfect for the summer and holidays. Take a drink, relax and listen to Skew Siskin.
14/20 for metal fans
17/20 for rock'n'roll fans
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

SKYCLAD
"VINTAGE WHINE"
The band that created folk metal and made some of the best albums ever, are Skyclad. A band that from the first time I listened to them, charmed me with the passion and inspiration their albums had. Unfortunately, "The Answer Machine" wasn't the album I was expecting. They were balancing dangerous between metal and folk preferring the second. But now Skyclad are back with a very good album, which will satisfy all their fans. This time guitars are more powerful than "The Answer Machine", Martin good as always and Georgina-the elf-Biddle mesmerises us with her violin. The ninth album of the English Folkmetalers contains some of the best songs Skyclad ever composed("The Silver Cloud's Dark Living" and "Bury me")and something that their fans already love; the perfect crossover between metal and folk.
P.S. But, it's not "Irrational Anthems".
18.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

THE LORD WEIRD SLOUGH FEG
"TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS"
I couldn't say that I liked Slough Feg so much as others, not because they don't worth it, but because they're playing different from my tastes. From the first hearing someone can understand that they are a band with unique personality and way of playing. I would characterize them as a mixture of Manilla Road (in vocals as well in some guitarist parts), the American power metal school and Black Sabbath, enriched by Celtic folk music. Celtic music is being used not only as intro or outro but in the backbone of the songs. These American bards sing of Celtic themes and also of battles, wizards, medivial age, etc creating an interesting result. The only defect of the record is that sometimes their influences seem to be assembled together, not mixed and being processed into something new, something that was the main problem (according to me) with their previous work, same named ("The lord weird 3 Feg"). Something it will surely be abolished in the future. Concluding they are a good and promising band, having something that many others miss: their own style and personality. They can't be compared or hear similar with anyone else.
16/20
NGD

SODOM
"CODE RED"
I really expected this release, as Sodom are one of my favorite bands, concerning that Kreator have changed their musical style now we can (?) take Sodom as the biggest trash band from Germany, so I expected this release to hear the way thrash metal sounds today and after I bought this CD, I can say that it occupied my CD-player for sometime, hearing nothing else. "Code red" can be described as the sequel to "Till death do us unite", here we have again tons of trash metal, the way Sodom have get us used to. Here we have 12 tracks (+ one intro) with social-war related lyrics thrown to our head as fast as Tommy can sing. We don't have funny songs here, as "Gisela" or "R'n'R star", while the cover as you can see is drawn in such a way that it will remind of the first works of the band. Of course as many of you will know, "code red" is accompanied by a bonus-CD containing covers of Sodom by many bands. Many of them played their song in their own personal way (Impaled Nazarene the best example) while some fucked the whole thing up playing them again, not preserving the same spirit.
18/20 (I have to be honest whatever they'd released, this would be the rank)
NGD

TILES
"PRESENTS OF MIND"
Now this is what I call a progressive metal band. Following the path that the divine band called Rush has opened for all the progressive metal/rock bands, they manage to create with their new, third album, a masterpiece of progressive metal mainly and rock sometimes. Their main influences(?) Rush (of course!) and sometimes they remind me of Fates Warning (89-94 era). The guys from Detroit are definitely virtuosos with their instruments, especially the guitar player and the drummer (influenced by the "professor on drums, Neil Peart"). Even their vocalist is a perfect mixture of Gaddy Lee (which means god disguised as a progressive rock musician) and James LaBrie. The production has been assigned to Terry Brown (known for his work for Rush and Fates Warning), creating the ideal fragile sound of this album. All the songs of the album are almost perfect, especially their instrumental "Ballad of sacred cows" and "Modification" kick some serious progressive ass. Rush would be proud of their child, Tiles.



19/20
PAUL PANANOUDAKIS

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS
"POEMS TO THE WRETCHED HEARTS"
This is the first time I've ever heard of them and since the promo didn't include a newsletter I don't know anything of their history or background. I only know that the only man behind this band, Schwadorf, is totally confused. He seems to be in an effort to satisfy every fan of extreme metal in the world. There are elements of Norwegian black metal, new wave "black metal", Swedish death metal, all that in a MCD containing three tracks and having a duration of 15 minutes. The songs are fine but they are all been heard before in better versions, becoming too monotonous and have failed to combine the many different elements with this magic receipt the big bands have. In my opinion, he must decide what does he wants to play and concentrate on that. I'm waiting his next work being almost sure that I'm waiting for something better. For conclusion just listen to it and decide for yourselves.
11/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

WITHERING SURFACE
"THE NUDE BALLET"
After the success of Children of Bodom, a lot of bands followed the same music way(you know why) and one of them are Withering Surface. They are coming from Denmark and they play power metal with brutal vocals. The band, musically is good with a lot of influences from bands like Helloween, Gamma Ray and Stratovarius but the vocals destroys the effort of Withering Surface. The band must insist on their own possibilities and not in something that we've heard a lot of times in the past from some other bands. Till then, Withering Surface won't surpass the moderation.
12/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
Contact: Withering Surface, c/o Michael H. Andersen , Vermlandsgade 74, 1 t.v.,2300 , Copenhagen S, Denmark

WYVERN
(PROMO CD)
This promo cd, has three songs and it's something that gives us an idea of what is going to be on the new album of the Italians Wyvern "Lords of Winter". The three songs that includes the cd, "Lord of Winter", "Twin Factory" and "The Other One" are very good and they are in power/speed metal, always with the unique Italian sound. Their influences are mainly from Helloween and other bands of melodic power metal. Especially, "Lord of Winter" is an anthem! As you realise the new album of Wyvern is going to kill. I'm waiting impatient for "Lords of Winter" and you must be sure that another band from Italy is going to conquer the metal world.
18.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
e-mail:wyvern85@hotmail.com
e-mail:wyvern85@iol.it
http://welcome.to/Wyvern

TRAUMA
"DAIMONION"
After Vader, Sacramentum and Lux Occulta, it's time for another band from Poland to prove that polish metal scene is ready to explode. Trauma is a band that has founded in 1986 and has released two demo-tapes under the name Thanatos and one as Trauma. Their second album "Daimonion" is in two parts. The first part is new songs and second some older stuff from their tape "Invisible Reality". The polish bands plays old fashioned death metal, but with a very modern sound. Aggressive metal with influences mainly from Vader, but also from great names of metal. For the fans of death metal is necessary. As for the others, listen to it before you'll buy it.
16/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

TULUS
"EVIL 1999"
Tulus:" I want to be Dark Throne in the place of Dark Throne'. Yes, what you are reading is completely right. Those guys from Norway are playing old-fashioned raw black metal in the vein of the true fathers of the norwegian scene. The cd is consisted of ten classic songs that do not have anything new to offer concerning that all have been heard in the first albums of Dark Throne , Burzum , Immortal and Emperor.THough the nearest approach is that of Isvind in the "Dark Waters Stir". Those that are not familiar with those bands will find this cd interesting because it contains nice songs carefully constructed and balancing between melody and the way black metal was in those fine and epic days . I do have a question though : what does that gay on back of the promo music for men and not for homosexuals .
13/20
KOSTAS ALEXANDRAKIS

DARK TRANQUILLITY
"PROJECTOR"
This band doesn't need any introductions. Dark Tranquillity, are a band that everytime impress me with the quality and power that their albums have. But this time the swedish band have beaten their own self. I dare to say that "Projector" is their best album ever. Strong riffs, melodies made from heaven and Mikael Stanne at his best. It's an album, real gift from Dark Tranquillity to heavy metal. From the first track "Free Card" till the last "On your Time", someone can easy realise that is album belongs to the new Millenium. My favourites "Auctioned" and "The sun Fired Blanks" are songs that even Dark Tranquillity, hard will compose in the future. The only feeling that this album leaves to the fan is admire. Admire, for the new kings of heavy metal.
19/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

URANUS
"THE CLANG OF LANCES"
This demo has been released back in 1997 but came only recently to my hands, so that's why it is presented now. Uranus can be considered as a a black metal band, while as they state about their work, their mixture with gothic and power metal create a different personality, not easy to be referred somewhere. "The clang..." is a 4 track demo plus one keyboard outro. Lyrically the songs cover aspects of the Hellenic mythology, while the music is helping for the creation of atmosphere, fitting with the lyrics. Something that is positive for this demo is that the keyboards as well as the female vocals used are part of the song, not just added there. As an ending, my copy is numbered 751, this means that the demo worths it. (5 USD everywhere, except 200 drachma+empty cassette for Hellas)
NGD
Contact: PR 15601, Papagou, Athens, Hellas (Greece)

VANIZE
"BOOTLICKER"
Does the name Dirkschneider says something to you? Before we have a mass hysteria it's not about UDO but his brother Peter and his band. You don't have to guess the style of this band because Vanize is in the veins of Accept. Peter has almost the same voice with his brother. It's going' to surprise you. It's like UDO sings. Musically, Vanize are very good with a lot of elements from N.W.O.B.H.M and German bands like Accept, Helloween e.t.c. It's a "gift" for all the Accept maniacs. Listen to "Bootlicker" and "Night Hunter" and you'll understand. The only bad thing is that Vanize haven't their personal identity, trying to get known through Accept. I hope that in the future, Vanize will present us something better. RECOMMENDED for fans of Accept and U.D.O. As for the others, you better check out for "Balls to the Wall" and "Restless and Wild"
18/20 for Accept fans
14/20 for the others
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

VARATHRON
"The lament of Gods"
Very few bands have achieved to gain the word "cult" following their name, and for me Varathron are one of them. After a long presence in the scene and facing many problems, someone can see them starting over again with a new contract (on Pagan records) and hopes. This is the mini CD, which will be followed by a full-length album containing four songs plus a cover of Mercyful Fate ("Nuns

have no fun"). Their songs are very strong and powerfull all in a death / prime black metal style containing some keyboards now and then to add to the atmosphere, while thematology is about the past mythology and occult. As about the cover of "Nuns..." , they have re-arranged it giving their personal style to it. Sure this mini-CD shows what they can achieve to the future.
ps. to your glorious past!
18/20
NGD

EVEN VAST

"HEAR ME OUT"

Of course when you hear about Italian metal, the first thing that comes to your mind is power metal, but Even Vast is the exception to the rule(?).This band is playing atmospheric metal in the veins of The Gathering and their compatriots Lacuna Coil. The female vocals are good thing that help the band. The song of Even Vast have a atmosphere and power that makes them very interesting. They have their own special sound and they don't follow the wave of bands that copies Theatre of Tragedy or The Gathering. I'm sure that their nex album will be their step of success. But till then, let's enjoy "Hear me Out" and follow Even Vast to their melancholic world.
16.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
Contact: Even Vast, P.O.Box 1,11020 Christophe, Aosta, Italy

VERDICT

"3rd ALTERNATINE THE NAME"

One of the bands that impressed me when I saw them on a live are Verdict. The power and the feeling that this band has, is something that hardly a band can do. Well, the same things are happening and in "3rd Alternative the Name". This is the first demo-tape of Verdict, a band that is playing American power metal in the style of Iced Earth. This tape has six powerful song including my favourite "Night Hunting". I'm happy realising that Hellas has such good bands, bands that any time can make a career and comparing to other "big" bands that the system helped them to be where they are. Good luck to Verdict because they deserve it.
17/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS
Contact: Vasilis Koumroglou, Fan Vaik 11,174-55,Kalamaki, Athens, Hellas.

VICTORY RECORDS

"Victory Style III"

By getting to hear a compilation like this, I knew what about was going to happen: I'd like some bands very much, some others I'd have no problem and about some others they'd sound just awful. Fortunately with Victory style, things were much better than my expectations as there was a very good good ones - bad ones ratio. I didn't like two bands there: Bad Brains (typical punk, nothing new to me) and Earth Crisis (it has to do with my personal tastes the seem too noisy to me). About the rest eighteen bands there I'd recommend: Warzone (maybe the best track on the CD), Catch 22 (nice music, fast catchy vocals) , Thumb (their music just stuck to my ear, coming to my head overnight), HI FI and the ROADBURNERS (unique as they use very good horn instruments), Skarhead and Blood for Blood. The internet address of the company:
NGD
www.victoryrecords.com

WARDOG

"A SOUND BEATING"

Tom Gattis, is a living part of heavy metal, a man that shows his love for our music, when he has the chance. From the years he was in Deuce 'till now in Wardog, Tom has offered a lot of things and it seems that he continues doing it. Here we have the third album of Wardog, called "A Sound Beating" ,a music bomb that is ready to explode! With albums like that, I have the feeling that heavy metal will last for ever. It might be lately in fashion true heavy metal, having a lot of bands that destroys the feeling of the music, but with Wardog and songs like "Welcome To The New Underground", "Changing Of The Guard" and "Close Friends, Closer Enemies" one thing is sure; that Wardog will send a lot of kids that they think they play heavy metal, back to their cradles! It's a classic.
P.S.Tom, you rule men!
18.5/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

VIOLET VORTEX

"RUSH HOUR OF LUST"

Violet Vorted is a band who has dedicated itself in re-creating the seventies feeling in their work as in a whole attitude, of course they play doom. Two things are those that surprised me about this band: (1) their dedication to what they're doing (even the artwork of the demo looks as if it was too old) and (2) what their bass player Spyros stated to me, "If you don't like our demo, write a bad review for it without taking intoi account that we know each other. We just do it for our fun and feeling...". It was the first time I've heard a musician being so honest with me. About the album, it's 31 minutes doom which tries, as I've said before, to immitate the feeling of old Black Sabbath. That's his strongest and weakest point: if you like it this way that you'll love this cassete if not you won't. About me, having myself as a more-newcomer to the scene, I liked some parts of it but not the whole (I admire Sabbath while I'm not a fan). As a ending I shouldn't forget to mention that Violet Vortex are
one of the very few bands playing doom in Hellas.
NGD
Contact: Spyros Zorbas, Neokleous 22, TK 12131, Peristeri, Athens, Hellas. Blank tape + Stamp or 3 USD or 3 IRC

VIRTUAL REALITY

"WISTFUL MIST"

This guys are from Athens and "Wistful Mist" is their first demo. Although this demo has been released almost a year ago, I just found it so here we are. Virtual
Reality are playing power-progressive metal with influences from bands like Iron Maiden and Queensryche. The thing that surprised me is that their age average is 16! Their playing very good for their age. It's scary if you imagine Virtual Reality in 4-5 years. The only thing that don't help the band is the sound. It's not so good as must be, because this kind of metal needs very good productions. Anyway, this demo is very good and I'm waiting anxiously for their next step.
16/20
NIKOS TZOUANNIS

Ancient Rites

Ancient Rites are one of my favorite bands ever for many different reasons. From the first time I decided to write on a fanzine, I had as a dream to get them interviewed. This fortunately happened in one of Gunther's visit in Hellas (something very often), where I interviewed him together with the guys from Painkiller zine (also operating in Athens) He had many and VERY interesting things to say about everything concerning not only his band, but the scene in general...

METAL STORM: ***In the beginning, I have to say that Ancient Rites, although they are one of my favorite bands, are one of the most difficult to interview because they've been asked about everybody (many magazine or fanzines) about everything. What happened to these people (showing Gunther the photo in the split 7" with Thou art lord, with the previous form of the band), where are they now?***

Ancient Rites: Actually one of them is still with us, the drummer. The guitarist decided to end his music career, he lives a quiet life now, he is the same person, but he has been disappointed from the music scene and he was tired of other people getting money on our backs. That's because at the end of the day, no matter how much we've sold it was always record companies and tour promoters who got the money while he had to sacrifice his jobs to be on tour with us and at the end of the day he had nothing on his bank account, you know. We all have the same problem more or less, but he was tired of it. He didn't want to continue. He even got an offer, while he was on Ancient Rites, Cradle of Filth offered him to be their guitarist. I don't know if he would be a session, but they had a show in Astoria, where his guitarist was kicked out and they proposed our guitarist to be playing in their show on the tour, but he refused that as well. He didn't want to do anything else in the music scene, saying that he had changed too much and that everything is about money...

METAL STORM: ***This leads us to my second question: People are now talking about the disappear - non existence of underground. Do you think that this happens, that everything is mainstream now and all it depends is promotion and money spend on a band now?***

Ancient Rites: In the end, yes.

B: So do you think that Ancient Rites are still an underground band?

Ancient Rites: I think yes, because still what we have is not payed for it. As an example we will get to Dynamo this year, because we had good reviews from the "Fatherland" album while other bands can get there with good management, good deals. So we did it from our own underground reputation, we still didn't have any money behind us.

METAL STORM: ***Songs in "Fatherland" are more melodic than in your previous albums, is this a natural change?***

Ancient Rites: It is a natural change because we have new people on the band. We have two guitarists now and a keyboard player, which means that they have their own influences. In the past it was just the three of us working together so the sound was more basic, although we always tried to keep a balance between aggression and atmosphere, while now there more atmosphere connected to it. I think it natural, I don't think someone could call it evolution. It's a next logical step, while on the other hand, it's new people in the band. Everyone has his own way of playing, background, way of doing things, that's why there are so many different influences in our music now.

METAL STORM: ***... more heavy I could say...***

Ancient Rites: Also, cause one of our guitarists is a heavy metal fan from a very young age but still totally into heavy metal - very fanatic. The other comes from Lacrimosa and he has melodic touch at classical music. So we come to the other session musician, he is a classical musician and he has his influences as well. While in the past, Ancient Rites was something like three guys playing basic stuff. I still believe in our old stuff as well.

METAL STORM: ***Can you talk about your impressions about the tour?***

Ancient Rites: It's good. We were already on tour with Deicide before. We had a variety of publics, because there were different types of groups. I could say that we were the only ones who had added some melody in their music in our previous tours cause the other bands were basically death metal bands. With our last tour things were different. We had bands like Infernus and Behemoth, Rotting Christ who have a different approach, Deicide. There were different types of people coming to the gigs, something good for all bands of course.

METAL STORM: ***Now you use many folk elements in your music, you consider these elements as a part of you?***

Ancient Rites: Yes, of course. We always wanted to do that more or less. Since that we've grown as musician it's more easy for us to incorporate different things and to focus on music itself. In our past we didn't look so much to do so, we were more focused into the aggression. Now we try to find a balance between the medivial and the extreme metal, like the two of them connected.

METAL STORM: ***And now talking about the aggression part, we bring ourselves to a very important part of Ancient Rites, their lyrics. You seem to be writing about things different than other bands: how people behave, history and such. Can you talk to me about your influences at this part?***

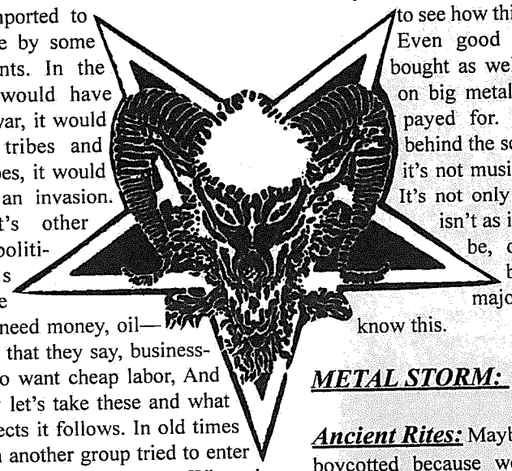
Ancient Rites: I travel a lot, I read a lot, ever since like child, I had certain interests. I try to cultivate them as time passes by. I gain always more information, for my the lyric-part is some kind of exorcism. Let's say a channel. The things I used to do were expresses in my paintings, I was a painter before, now music is my way to express my feelings for long forgotten times, ancient/medivial history-quality or everything..

METAL STORM: ***Do you think that this kind of behaving, the ancient one still remains in people today?***

Ancient Rites: I think it's quite difficult because the circumstances of life are very different. It's very easy to go now for five minutes in the Norwegian woods with the swords - and I know what I'm saying now is not popular - and in stand the snow and say: "I'm a Viking", but five minutes after you go back to the electricity and the luxury-live . So the only thing left is to dream of times we never lived. We will never know, exactly how it really was. It must have been very hard to live back in those times. I think some values can be kept, but everyone has his own type. Although I dream of times I never lived, it's a contradiction. I dream from a luxury point of view. May people of those times should want to live by now, because times are better, life expectations are better.

B: There must be a deeper message from those people.

Ancient Rites: Yeah, I'm really fascinated about these times, but from a realistic point of view, not something like Conan the barbarian or anything. I believe now we are based on different things. In the past, I believe, people would have acted differently. We have many problems: politics, immigration, religious fundamentalism coming to my country because we have many immigrants from the middle east. You know they get more and more fanatic about their religion, as you know in eastern countries tourists are being killed, this is being imported to our place by some immigrants. In the past it would have been a war, it would be our tribes and their tribes, it would be like an invasion. Now it's other things politicians decide that we need money, oil— we need that they say, businessmen who want cheap labor, And they say let's take these and what bad aspects it follows. In old times when an another group tried to enter your domain, it meant war. When they did that or tried to take place.



METAL STORM: ***It's something concerning the Fatherland album, the lyrics about the Roman invasion in Belgium. They preferred to die than to surrender.***

Ancient Rites: Back then there was more pride. And what we do now? We bow our hands and we are being closer to death. Politicians use the weapon of labeling someone as a "racist" to suppress natural instincts, I'm really not talking about politics here, but in ancient times there were other ways. The ancient or medivial Flanders had some pride. Now in modern times when you speak of these matters you get finger pointed, and full of mail saying that "you're a Nazi", but it's just that I'm talking about ancient/medivial ways to deal with problems, our Ancient pride that it's lost. About Flanders now, imagine that at about 1830, 150 years ago, you united Hellas with a neighboring country, with different language and culture, saying: now it's one country. Then you will always feel you are more Hellenic than that other "nation". So Flanders is my nation, not Belgium because it is a bit artificial. It started about politics, money, investment...

METAL STORM : ***Talking about money, I'd like to ask your opinion about the music industry.***

Ancient Rites: I hate it, but I am a part of it. Sometimes I see prices which are so high for albums. In America the prices are very high because it's all imported. I am wondering who is getting all that money - we don't! It's really a bit strange to see how this industry works. Even good reviews can be bought as well as appearances on big metal festivals can be payed for. When you look behind the screen you see that it's not music what it's about. It's not only for music and it isn't as it was supposed to be, or started at the beginning. The majority of fans don't know this.

METAL STORM: ***They can't know.***

Ancient Rites: Maybe we will be more boycotted because we don't play the game, we don't follow the rules. All other bands accepted it Everyone would ask: why didn't Ancient Rites come?

METAL STORM: ***When a group enters this industry, can it maintain it's purity and remain true?***

Ancient Rites: Yes, it depends on how strong you are and which room you are working. When a band has it's originally members leaving, you deal with new people. And you don't know what these people want. Let's say three people begin, they know the other underground bands and begin from zero. At a certain point you reach certain stages of fame. Then it's suddenly more easy to pick up new members when needed, In the past I couldn't find them, now I can pick up from all over Europe. I don't know how honest it is.

METAL STORM: ***This reminds me of metallica, who started from zero and now it's only for money.***

Ancient Rites: This is strange because they don't do it for the money anymore: they are already rich. I wonder why they still keep the name "metallica", while they are so far away from metal sound. I understand that people want to change, to do something different. If you want to do so, keep the name intact, start on a different field with a different name.

METAL STORM: ***I wanted to ask something about your music. Ancient Rites keep the same feeling in every release of their's. Did "Fatherland" help you to add new followers to the band? People who will keep following you, as older fans?***

Ancient Rites: It's too difficult to say. The album is out not so long enough. If they stay, it's something that we will see in one or two years. What I found very strange was that recently we played a concert in Belgium, which was sold-out, and I couldn't recognize anyone in the club. In the past, I knew everyone, but know I was in a club full of strangers. The old supporters -where are they? Maybe they found out that we are too big and they didn't want to be a part of it. More people are coming to our shows, something old fans don't like. We attract many kinds of people who don't feel our music.

METAL STORM: ***That means that Ancient Rites have gained a new audience...***

Ancient Rites: Yes

METAL STORM (Stefanos): ***Only heavy metal audience?***

Ancient Rites: Strange, all kinds of audience. Of course I see many heavy metal dressed people, but I have also seen people from different styles, totally different. I've seen hardcore people, strange- we aren't a hardcore band. Not every-time extreme dressed. In the past we had spikes and leather dressed people. Now I see people just with a t-shirt, of many music kinds: Gothic, Hardcore, Hard Rock. The old black metal fans are still there, but they are not the majority now.

METAL STORM: ***You don't use corpse paint anymore?***

Ancient Rites: Yes, for two reasons: now everyone is doing it, and after much thought it's not good to be influenced by anyone else. When in a festival you see every band after you and before you to do it, it fells like circus: who has the best paint on him? and such. It has lost it's feeling.

METAL STORM: ***But there are bands like Immortal who have used it from the beginning and continue to do so...***

Ancient Rites: We did it before Immortal were using it. If you see on "Evil Prevails", I wear corpse-paint. We found out that too many were doing it. I don't judge bands like Immortal because they were doing it from their beginning, and they can do it. But there are bands who sometimes do it and sometimes not, according to the circumstance. It depends according to the circumstance. I've seen bands who were against it doing it, as well as promoters demanding it from bands. This is a reason for not doing it for us, when it becomes a rule or a dogma. When I've seen such bands on the press doing this... Where is the cult feeling? It isn't even realistic.

METAL STORM: ***Do you have elements of show (lights, smoke or anything) in your lives now?***

Ancient Rites: For a while we used real blood for big amounts of time, but it's inconvenient for being used in tour - it smells awful, while others are doing it as well. So we go back to the basics, wearing leather, bullets banging, a lot of smoke sometimes.

METAL STORM: ***Is the flag (..: of Flanders) always there?***

Ancient Rites: Always!!

METAL STORM: ***Which are the sacrifices that Ancient Rites have done.***

Ancient Rites: Interesting question, I couldn't have a normal job, because I have to be available for tour every time. When I go home, it's another tour I've to go. The sacrifices that I've made are that I cannot build a normal life. All I have are invested in the band. The negative aspect is that it doesn't return. It returns to the promoters and the company. So I have no normal life and no security for me. This happens with many bands: when you get older, you have to think of yourself as well, to become realistic. I always was into music for the hart, for the show, not for the money, but when it gets to the moment that I can't pay my bills anymore, something has to change. Now the music, but I may have to stop them. It's the hard reality.

METAL STORM: ***Let's change subject again and talk about Dance Macabre. How the stage react/ fans press etc?***

Ancient Rites: Of course there are some people who absolutely hated it, because they don't accept the fact that I have different music tastes than metal as well. The reactions were good. We played several concerts as Dance Macabre. When I return back we will play again a concert in a goth festival as headliners - too strange. In every show we did, we were headliners (Holland - Stonehenge festival open air).

METAL STORM: ***What happened with the old members (of Dance Macabre)?***

Ancient Rites: Sotiris had to go to the army of Hellas and disappear for two years, George was concerned into Metal Invader magazine, Necromantia and the studio. I wanted to continue with these but I couldn't. So it couldn't continue with the three of us. I found other members to complete the album and a line-up. Again we have members from all over Europe (bass player from Serbia, drummer from Holland, guitarist from Finland and Flanders, keyboard player half Greek half Austrian).

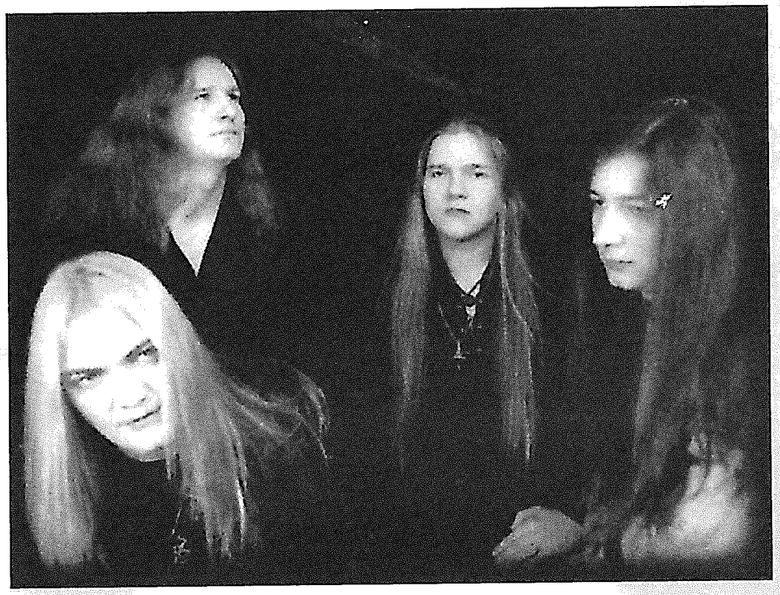
METAL STORM: ***Let's go back to Ancient Rites, and talk about the memories from your beginning/very first moments.***

Ancient Rites: This is strange to say, but in an extreme way, we were less successful and I was more happy, now we are more successful and me less happy. The only thing that makes me happy is the reactions from the public and the fact that I can do this: I lost my dreams, I never thought many (others said off-the record before), could be possible, I thought metal was for music only and that was different from all other music styles.

METAL STORM: ***This was also my***

opinion, which is more and more fading away.

Ancient Rites: That is what is when I told that I was more happy about this, now it's fading away. Now that I've been on the road for ten years with Ancient Rites I've seen many things behind the screen. There are some bands that fans think of as very big, I've seen a band like these (I won't mention names) telling me: "... we will make two demos on death style, and if we get popular with this, we will continue, if not we'll fuck it and do something else." and they got popular with it, nobody knows, they believe them as leaders of the scene. This was weird, people don't know what shit is going on. The only reason I still do it is for the music, and some fans. All the rest is so corrupted and sick. Some bands say: "If we have no drugs, we won't play today". It's a bit ironic but I've reached my dreams, I do what I wanted to do. As I child I dreamed of touring Europe: I did it. I played concerts at Hellas, and now I will go to Colombia, South America, I dream I had when I started. The dreams came true, but in a different way. As I grow older I believe that I've preferred not to do some things, I'd just stay a fan, listen to the records and now always know what is going on behind the screen.



METAL STORM: ***Talking about this corruption of modern times, as well as in their music, do you believe that there are some bands who worth your appreciation and that are true to what they're doing?***

Ancient Rites: New bands: One I really liked is from Russia, named "Thy Repentance", very unknown, and now for the underground shake, I liked their music and sent to them a letter of appreciation. They were really surprised of someone outside of Russia knowing: They haven't the chance to go outside their home-town and all they have is their music. They are isolated and this is depicted in their music, as it's very dark and gloomy, a combination of melancholy and aggression. It's a kind of black metal band, but they feeling is there, somehow I feel it. Their next release will be something like a tape or something. Other band that I liked, which is not metal anymore and surprised me with their melodies and poetic lyrics is "Anti-Crisis". I was surprised, I learned of them on tour, so I bought the album a few days ago from Athens.

METAL STORM : ***Do you get any ideas from the albums you hear, that you use on Ancient Rites?***

Ancient Rites: No, everything comes from my instinct and this is the way I like it, sure we will take a step further. When I go to the studio, I don't listen to any heavy metal albums, because maybe subconsciously, they will influence me and I might take some ideas. Things that influence me non-musically are Lord Byron, Boulduere, and my trips: in desert, Spain, Hellas.

METAL STORM : ***What do you think about bands in the retro - thrash movement, like Swordmaster, Bewitched...***

Ancient Rites: They are very good friends of mine, but I like to tease them, because they didn't see the bands I saw. The retro for me not like a new starting for them, but not for me, because I was there when the first starting was going on. They are younger, Bewitched are very fanatic about metal, in the bus they always heard of metal music, head-banging around all-together and such. Only with Impaled Nazarene, we saw this again. Of course they rip-off riffs. It's strange, I bought the old bands when they were out. Fans haven't heard of these and believe that it's all from retro-bands. You can find the same music on other albums. Let's say that I prefer to listen to the originals, or even why should I listen to a band that tries to imitate Helloween, when I didn't like Helloween in the first place. I listened to Voivoid as they were then, Razor, Kreator, Destruction, Sodom. These were my bands. I didn't like to see a band wearing span-trousers, singing like a woman. For me classical metal is bands like Motorhead, Iron Maiden.

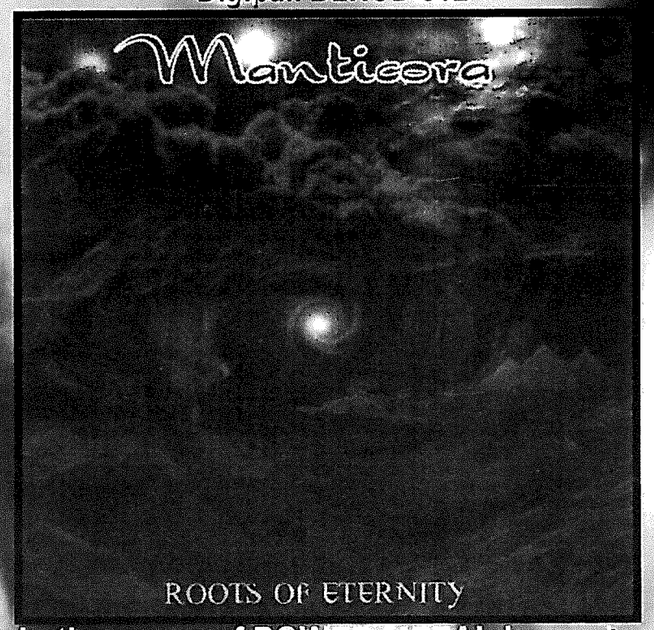
METAL STORM: ***Our classical question as a zine: suppose that you had a fan in front of you, who didn't know anything about Ancient Rites, how would you characterize your music to him, in order to listen to you.***

Ancient Rites: I'd like to say that we play metal and medivial music, different aspects of underground metal combined together. I always say that we play metal, we try to have a personal sound, not belonging somewhere in metal. It was a risk with the new members, not to use their own typical sound, so hopefully our new members didn't act typically, having their own personality. If we start to become boring and playing the same, we will abandon Ancient Rites. We try to become different, I sing differently from album to album, we will never change the concept. Ancient means ancient/ medivial times, rites our connection with the dark side. I can't sing about loosing the girlfriend, drinking beer and such. homepage:...

NGD

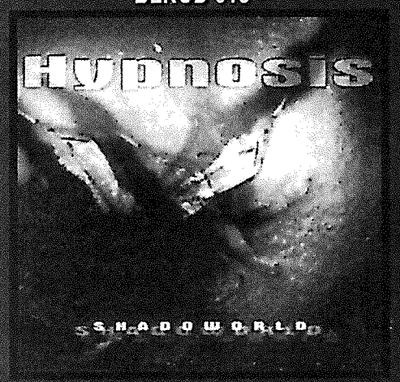
SHEER POWER

MANTICORA - "Roots of eternity"
Digipak BLRCD 012



The next big thing in the scene of POWER METAL is coming from Denmark.
POWER AND MELODY!
HYMN!

HYPNOSIS - "Shadoworld"
BLRCD 013



cal GOTHIC/DEATH METAL from France.
antastic female vocals and emotion!

PHANTOM LORD - "In twilight world"
BLRCD 013

A masterpiece of authentic HEAVY METAL
played from veterans!

BLACK LOTUS RECORDS

SOUND & VISION